

CHAPTER III
PEOPLE

POPULATION

Baleshwar is the smallest district of the state in area, but as regards population it ranks sixth among the 13 districts of the state. As per 1981 Census, the district was divided into 3 subdivisions, 9 Tahasils* and 21 police-stations**. The population*** of these administrative units is given below.

District/Subdivision/ Tahasil/Police-stations (1)	Males (2)	Females (3)	Total population (4)
BALESHWAR DISTRICT	1,139,355	1,113,453	2,252,808
Baleshwar Subdivision			
Baleshwar Tahasil	139,251	128,570	267,821
Baleshwar P.S.	112,306	102,931	215,237
Remuna P.S.	26,945	25,639	52,584
Jaleshwar Tahasil	158,622	152,049	3,10,671
Raibania P.S.	27,227	26,154	53,381
Jaleshwar P.S.	42,140	39,600	81,740
Bhograi P.S.	89,255	86,295	175,550
Basta Tahasil	140,260	134,559	274,819
Baliapal P.S.	48,944	47,608	96,552
Singla P.S.	38,703	36,659	75,362
Basta P.S.	52,613	50,292	1,02,905
Soro Tahasil	183,146	183,070	366,216
Soro P.S.	95,056	93,702	188,758
Khaira P.S.	41,190	42,612	83,802
Similia P.S.	46,900	46,756	93,656
Bhadrak Subdivision			
Bhadrak Tahasil	191,481	189,139	880,620
Bant P.S.	36,622	36,342	72,964
Bhadrak P.S.	104,344	100,354	204,698

* Tihidi Tahasil has been formed as an addition to the existing 9 Tahasils since the 1st December, 1992.

** Besides, Baleshwar town police-station and Bhadrak town police-station which are functioning in the district since long were not included in the Census list. In the meantime some new police-stations, viz., Khantapada, Oupada, Naikandihi, Dhusuria, Chandipur, Agarpara and Rupsa have been created in the district for better administrative convenience.

*** Census of India, 1981, Orissa, Final Population Totals, pp. 14—17.

According to Census of India, 1991, Orissa, Paper I of 1991, Provisional Population Totals, the population of Baleshwar district is 2,796,321 (1,420,708 males and 1,375,613 females).

District/Subdivision/ Tahasil/Police-stations	Males	Females	Total population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Tihidi P. S. (Portion)	50,515	52,443	102,958
Basudebpur Tahasil	74,720	75,414	150,134
Basudebpur P. S.	74,720	75,414	150,134
Chandbali Tahasil	78,933	75,451	154,384
Bansada P. S.	36,124	33,913	70,037
Tihidi P. S. (Portion)	5,599	5,622	11,221
Chandbali P. S.	37,210	35,916	73,126
Dhamnagar Tahasil	103,413	106,530	209,943
Dhamnagar P. S.	67,138	70,290	137,428
Bhandaripokhari P. S.	36,275	36,240	72,515
Nilagiri Subdivision			
Nilagiri Tahasil	69,529	68,671	138,200
Nilagiri P. S.	52,074	51,510	103,584
Berhampur P. S.	17,455	17,161	34,616

Growth of Population

The table below shows the decennial growth of population of the district from 1901 to 1991.*

Census Year	Males	Females	Total	Decade variation	percentage decade variations
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1901	552,003	588,099	1,140,102		
1911	538,597	585,685	1,124,282	-15,820	-1.39
1921	498,365	547,361	1,045,726	-78,556	-6.99
1931	514,635	544,559	1,059,194	+13,468	+1.29
1941	547,883	560,892	1,108,775	+49,581	+4.68
1951	556,066	549,946	1,106,012	-2,763	-0.25
1961	717,340	698,583	1,415,923	+309,911	+28.02
1971	928,342	902,162	1,830,504	+414,581	+29.28
1981	1,139,355	1,113,453	2,252,808	+422,304	+23.07
1991	1,420,708	1,375,613	2,796,321	+543,513	+24.13

* Census of India, Orissa, 1981, Par. II-A, General Population Tables, p. 149 and Census of India, 1991, Orissa, Paper 1 of 1991 Provisional Population Totals, p. 1.33.

The statement reveals that the population of the district which was 1,140,102 in 1901 rose to 2,252,808 in 1981 marking an increase of 197·60 per cent during 80 years. This is more than the state average of 155·94 per cent during the same period.

During the decade* 1901—11 the district faced agricultural distress and epidemic diseases. Scarcity of food and malnutrition led to increase in death in unprecedented numbers. The natural increase in population was thus checked. Emigration was resorted to which helped further to reduce the population growth by 1·39 per cent in the Census of 1911. Although the decade (1911—21) began well with good harvests during the first four years, the remainder of the decade was a period of bad health and poor harvests. Except in the year 1917, when the number of births was in excess of the number of deaths, the entire period was one of deaths exceeding births. Inadequate rainfall in 1915 and 1916 brought about scarcity of food as well as outbreak of cholera. Failure of crops in 1918 followed by the decimating influenza epidemic shot up the death rate. Due to these factors the population of the district decreased to the extent of 6·99 per cent. The pernicious effects of the devastation of the period 1915-20 continued in the next decade, 1921—31. Recovery from influenza and malaria fever was not seen fully till the close of the decade. During the first seven years, the deaths outnumbered the births, but some improvement in public health was noticed during the last three years. The death rate came down and the Census of 1931 showed a small increase of 1·29 per cent.

The decade 1931—41 was a comparatively prosperous period even though there was inadequate rainfall in 1934, 1935 and 1939 and floods in 1933 and 1940 damaged the crops. But during the remaining years the harvests were good. Outbreaks of epidemics, like cholera and fever in the years 1935, 1936 and 1939 caused some distress. In spite of that the Census of 1941 recorded a moderate increase of population to the extent of 4·68 per cent over the population of 1931.

The period 1941—51 was again a calamitous decade. Insufficient rains and failure of crops in 1941 was followed by a severe cyclone in 1942 which devastated extensive areas. Roofs were blown off and houses collapsed. Animal and bird life almost completely perished. Boats capsized and a large number of cattle and about 291 persons lost their lives. In the year 1943 damage to crops was repeated while a strong easterly wind caused saline inundation of crops in 1944. There after floods became a common feature

*Census year—Sun rise of 1st March.

almost every year. Public health deteriorated badly and rigours of fever reappeared. Fever, cholera and small-pox increased the death rate between 1941 to 1947. Some improvement in health condition was noticeable after 1948. The Census of 1951 showed a decline in population growth by 0.25 per cent.

The decade 1951—61 was an era of peace and prosperity. This was reflected in the phenomenal growth of population. The entire district was covered by the Community Development and National Extension Service Blocks. Intensive drive for the restoration of public health yielded good results and the death rate was cut short considerably. Agricultural extension programme enhanced the exportable capacity of paddy, which used to be sent outside the state. Rice mills grow in number throughout the district. Further development was achieved in various fields, such as, lift irrigation, spread of education, extension of medical facilities in towns and rural areas and improvement of road communication. When the district was passing through the decade of multi-sided developments, the floods of 1955 and 1960 caused dislocation in the progress. Except these two years of natural calamities the decade was a period of agricultural and general economic prosperity. The Census of 1961 booked the first ever high growth of population which stood at 1,415,923 with an increase of 28.02 per cent. It had crossed the population level of 1901 for the first time after six decades and an impressive event in history of its population growth. The spectacular population growth has produced very high densities exceeding the state average. This is the only district where the density as well as the population growth have crossed the state average in all the police-stations with the sole exception of Bhandaripokhari police-station.

The decade 1961—71 has registered the highest (29.28 per cent) growth of population. It is higher than the state average of 25.05 per cent. The reasons for the growth of population are control of epidemics, improved public health, good harvests, industrial and commercial development at Baleshwar, Bhadrak and Chandbali. Flood and cyclone which are regular features in Baleshwar district do not appear to have affected the growth of population. All these factors helped to record the third highest population growth in the state.

The decade 1971—81 has recorded 23.07 per cent growth of population in the district. This is 6.21 per cent less than the previous decade.

The last decade 1981-91 has recorded 24.13 per cent growth of population in the district. But this growth is higher than the state average of 19.50 per cent.

Density

The density of population varies from decade to decade. It can be seen from the table given below.

Census year	Density of population per sq. km.	
	Baleshwar District	Orissa State
(1)	(2)	(3)
1961	221	113
1971	286	141
1981	357	169
1991 (Provisonal)	443	202

The density of population of Baleshwar district continue to be high in the Censuses of 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991. It has crossed the state average all the times. The high density is due to fertile land.

The Census of 1961 recorded the highest density of population in Baleshwar subdivision and the lowest in Nilagiri subdivision which is one of the most underdeveloped areas of the district. Further analysis reveals that Jaleshwar Tahasil is the most densely (461 persons per sq. km.) inhabited area whereas Nilagiri Tahasil is the most sparsely (203 persons per sq. km.) inhabited area in the district. Among the police-stations, Bhograi tops the list with 600 persons per sq. km. and Nilagiri ranks the lowest with 202 persons. Of the six urban centres* in the district, Baleshwar, the district headquarters leads with 3,385 persons per sq. km.

Rural Population

The total number of villages in the district is 4,340 of which 3,832 are inhabited as per 1981 Census. The total rural population of the district** is 2,066,845 (1,040,612 males and 1,026,233 females) giving an average of 541 persons per inhabited village against 499 for the state as a whole. The proportion of rural population to the total population of the district is 91.74 per cent. This proportion is higher than the state which is 88.20 per cent. In the statement, at page 116 the proportion of different size of villages to the total number of villages and the population of such villages to the total rural population is shown according to the Census of 1981.

*There were seven urban centres in 1991.

**The 1991 Census (provisonal) has recorded 2,531,825 persons (1,281,066 males and 1,250,759 females) in rural areas of the district.

Villages with population	No. of villages	Percentage of No. of villages in this range to total No. of villages	Rural population	Percentage of population in this range to total rural population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Less than 200 ..	1,122	29.27	118,985	5.76
200—499 ..	1,318	34.40	437,944	21.19
500—999 ..	842	21.97	587,443	28.42
1,000—1,999 ..	432	11.27	575,140	27.83
2,000—4,999 ..	111	2.90	301,976	14.61
5,000—9,999 ..	7	0.18	45,357	2.19
10,000 and above..	..	..	..	..

It is evident from the foregoing statement that the number of villages with population having less than 500 is the highest in the district. These villages constitute 63.67 per cent of the total number of villages. The villages of this category accommodated 26.95 per cent of the total rural population of the district. These figures though significant, have registered a fall when compared to the 1971 Census figures which recorded 70.09 per cent and 33.53 per cent respectively. Correspondingly an increase in the percentage of medium and large-sized villages is noticed. This trend is in par with the state figures. In the entire state of Orissa, there are 48 villages with a population of 5,000 and above. Out of these large-sized villages, seven are in Baleshwar district. The list is given below*:

Name of police-station	No. of villages	Population
(1)	(2)	(3)
Baleshwar ..	2	11,845
Singla ..	1	8,403
Baliapal ..	1	5,248
Basudebpur ..	2	13,829
Bhadrak ..	1	6,032

* Census of India. 1981 Orissa, Part II A, General Population Tables, pp. 168-69.

Urban Population

The Urban population of the district is 264, 496 (139, 642 males and 124,854 females) according to 1991 Census (Provisional). The proportion of urban population to the total population of the district is 9.46 per cent which is less than the corresponding state figure of 13.43 per cent. The following statement gives a picture of the growth of population in towns since 1901.*

Name of town (1)	Population				
	1901 (2)	1911 (3)	1921 (4)	1931 (5)	1941 (6)
Baleshwar ..	20,880	21,362	17,037	17,843	19,405
Bhadrak ..	18,518	18,578	18,175	18,283	19,550
Jaleshwar ..	..	..	..	..	..
Chandbali ..	..	..	..	..	..
Soro ..	..	..	..	..	..
Basudebpur ..	..	..	..	..	..
Nilagiri ..	..	..	..	..	..

Name of town (1)	Population				
	1951 (7)	1961 (8)	1971 (9)	1981 (10)	1991 (P) (11)
Baleshwar ..	22,851	33,931	46,239	65,779	102,504
Bhadrak ..	18,795	25,285	40,487	60,600	76,390
Jaleshwar ..	..	10,202	6,711	13,146	16,790
Chandbali ..	..	9,406	6,717	7,808	8,185
Soro ..	..	13,081	Declassified	18,599	22,726
Basudebpur ..	..	..	..	20,031	25,101
Nilagiri ..	..	..	..	..	12,800

* Census of India, 1981, Orissa, Part II A. General Population Tables, pp. 224-32 and Census of India, 1991, Orissa, paper 1 of 1991 Provisional Population Totals Supplement, pp. 81-85.

It appears from the census records that Baleshwar and Bhadrak were the two towns in the district from 1901 to 1951. Jaleshwar, Chandbali and Soro acquired urban status in 1961. Thus the number of towns increased from two in 1951 to five in 1961. In 1971, Soro lost its urban status owing to change in the definition of urban areas. As a result, the number of towns was reduced from five to four.

In 1981, Soro and Basudebpur attained urban status. This helped to increase urban population from 100,154 in 1971 to 185,963 in 1981 and number of towns from four to six. Nilagiri urban area with population 12,800 got urban status. As a result, number of towns increased again from six to seven according to 1991 Census (provisional).

Baleshwar Urban Agglomeration which includes Baleshwar Municipality (population 86,116) and Baleshwar Industrial Estate (population 16,388) is classified under class I town in 1991 Census (provisional), Bhadrak is the only class II town. Basudebpur and Soro are placed under class III town. According to population, Jaleshwar and Nilagiri are treated as class IV town. Chandbali is the only class V town in the district.

Further analysis of the statement shows that the population of Baleshwar, the district headquarters, grew from 65,779 to 102,504 during the period 1981—91. Similarly, Bhadrak town also recorded rise in population from 60,600 to 76,390 during the same period. The decennial growth rate of population of this subdivisional headquarters town is 26.06 per cent. This is lower than the previous decade, 1971—81, which was 49.68 per cent. The people of both the towns are engaged in trade and commerce, services and industries.

Jaleshwar is a commercial town. It is situated to the north of Baleshwar. The population of this town rose from 13,146 to 16,790 during the decade 1981—91. This decade has registered 27.72 per cent growth of urban population. The main activities of the people are confined to betel leaves, manufacture of mat and its allied products.

The growth of population of Soro town during the decade 1981—91 is +22.19 per cent. The town is reached both by road and by rail.

Basudebpur town is situated near the Bay of Bengal. Fish is generally exported from this town. The town has recorded +25.31 per cent rise in population during the decade 1981—91.

Chandbali is a small town. It was once a flourishing port on the left bank of the river Baitarani. The main export through this port town was rice and the chief import was kerosene oil, salt and cotton. Hence the activities of the people are confined to trade and commerce, industry and transport. The growth of population of this town is +4.83 per cent in 1981--91, the lowest among the urban areas of the district.

Displaced persons

During the partition of the country large number of persons from West Pakistan (present Pakistan) and East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) were displaced. They were settled in different parts of the country. The total number of such migrants to the state of Orissa from 1946 to 1951 was 20,039. Of the displaced persons 2,429 persons have settled in Baleshwar, Bhadrak and Nilagiri subdivisions of the Baleshwar district. Among the subdivisions Baleshwar subdivision had provided settlement to 2,216 persons. Barring 97 from West Pakistan, the rest came from East Pakistan. In rural area, such persons numbered 2,163 (1,108 males and 1,055 females). Various facilities were provided to rehabilitate them and loans were also given to enable them to become self-sufficient.

Recently, Government of India have decided to establish a National Testing Range for testing rockets, missiles and satellites in the coastal belt of Baliapal police-station of Baleshwar district. As a result, 54 villages would be affected and 40,793 persons would be displaced.

Age-group

Percentage distribution of population by sex and age group in 1971 is given below* :

Age-group	Males	Fem	Total	Percentage to population of the district
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
0-14 years	409,503	406,385	815,888	44.6
15-59 years	458,851	436,801	895,652	48.9
60 years and above	59,901	58,922	118,823	6.5

* A Portrait of Population, Orissa, 1971, p. 158 and 172.

It is noticed from the table that a large percentage (44.6 per cent) of young population in the age-group (0—14) is found in the district. It is higher than the state average of 42.4 per cent. The largest proportion of young population is found in the Kalahandi district (45.0 per cent) and the lowest proportion of the youthful age-group is seen in Sambalpur district (38.6 per cent).

Coming to the working age-group (15—59), the district of Baleshwar attracts our attention with the lowest proportion of population, i. e., 48.9 per cent. In this category, the highest proportion is found in Sambalpur district (54.6 per cent).

The statement also shows that age-group 60 and above constitute 6.5 per cent of the district population. It is higher than the state figure of 6.0 per cent. Four districts, viz., Cuttack, Sambalpur, Puri and Ganjam have more than 6 per cent of their respective population in this age-group.

Further analysis of the 1971 Census reveals that the lowest proportion of the population in this age-group is found in Koraput, Sundargarh and Kendujhar districts. The proportion of Koraput district (3.8 per cent) in particular is much lower than the other districts and points to the fact that a large proportion of persons in this district die before they reach the sixties.

According to 1981 Census 937,418 persons (41.6 per cent) are found in the age-group 0-14. The next age-group 15-59 recorded 1,167,871 persons (51.9 per cent). In the age-group 60 and above only 147,066 persons (6.5 per cent) are noticed. Percentage of population in age-groups 0-14 and 60+ are almost dependent on the percentage of population in age group 15-19. Baleshwar district is the highest in recording the dependency ratio of 93 per 100. The lowest dependency ratio is recorded in Koraput and Mayurbhanj as 79.

Sex ratio

According to the 1991 Census (provisional) the male-female ratio in the district was 968 females per 1,000 males. In the rural areas the ratio was 976:1,000 while in the urban areas it was 894:1,000. For Orissa state taken as a whole the ratio was 972 females per 1,000 males, the corresponding figures for the rural and urban areas of the whole state being 989:1,000 and 866:1,000 respectively. The table at page 121 shows the male-female ratio (females per 1,000 males) in rural, urban and total from 1901 to 1991*.

*Census of India, Orissa, part II A, 1981, p. 147 and Census of India, 1991, Orissa. Paper I of 1991, Provisional population Totals, pp. 76-77.

Year	Number of females per 1,000 males		
	Rural	Urban	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1901	1,068	1,007	1,065
1911	1,090	1,012	1,087
1921	1,103	977	1,098
1931	1,064	894	1,058
1941	1,028	910	1,024
1951	993	884	989
1961	983	846	974
1971	979	848	972
1981	986	883	977
1991 (P)	976	894	968

It is noticed from the table that the sex ratio rose from 1065 in 1901 to 1098 in 1921. Thereafter it declined in successive censuses and reached at 972 in 1971. The Census of 1981 recorded 977 which is higher than the previous year. In 1991 (p), it declined again to 968. The scarcity of women is observed in the district from 1951. The reasons may be due to birth of more male than female babies, mortality among female infants and maternal mortality due to malnutrition, disease and frequent child bearing under poor medical care.

Further analysis reveals that the district has higher female ratio in rural areas than urban. This is probably due to protracted absence of male members who have moved out of the villages for employment in urban areas and therefore the absentees are not the census figures of rural areas.

Migration

In 1971* the migrants to this district constituted 6.09 per cent of the total population of whom 2.66 per cent were born outside the state. The migrants from outside the state hailed from Andhra Pradesh (1820), Assam (35), Bihar (1540), Gujarat (285), Haryana (215), Himachal Pradesh (85), Jammu & Kashmir (10), Kerala (65), Madhya Pradesh (120), Maharashtra (145), Mysore (Karnataka) (30), Punjab (110), Rajasthan (1005), Tamil Nadu (335), Tripura (20), Uttar Pradesh (635), West Bengal (40,405), and Delhi (20). As this district is on the border of West Bengal, the largest number of immigrants have come from that state. The immigrants from countries like Burma (Myanmar), Nepal, Pakistan and elsewhere to this district numbered 1825. Of these 985 persons were from Pakistan, persons born in Europe and Africa are not significant. The distribution of population on the basis of place of birth is as follows**.

Place of birth	Males	Females	Total	Percentage to total population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Born in place of enumeration	8,30,181	4,81,894	1,312,075	71.68
Born elsewhere in the district of enumeration	61,991	3,44,783	4,06,774	22.22
Born in other districts of the state	19,695	43,035	62,730	3.43
Born in other state in India	15,505	31,375	46,880	2.56
Born in countries in Asia beyond India (including U. S. S. R.).	935	875	1,810	0.10
Born in Europe (excluding U. S. S. R.)	5	..	5	Negligible
Born in Africa	10	..	10	Negligible
Unclassifiable	20	200	220	Negligible

*Census of India, Orissa, 1971, Migration Tables, Part II-D, pp. 18—20.

**In 1981, the migrants to this district constituted 6.42 per cent of the total population of whom 2.52 per cent were born outside the state.

The predominance of females in all the categories of migrants, except those born at the place of enumeration, indicates that they have moved from one village to another and from one police-station to another consequent to their marriage, while participation in economic pursuits may be the secondary aspects thereof.

Physically handicapped persons

There are 3,906 physically handicapped persons in the district. Number of such persons category-wise is given below according to 1981 Census*.

Area	Disabled population by type of disability			
	Totally blind	Totally crippled	Totally dumb	Total disabled persons
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Rural ..	1,544	1,374	785	3,703
Urban ..	77	71	55	203
Total ..	1,621	1,445	840	3,906

It is evident from the table that majority of the disabled persons are rural dwellers. Among the disabled persons totally blind persons are found in large numbers in the district.

LANGUAGE

The district of Baleshwar presents a colourful confluence of tribal and non-tribal languages. Santali, Bhumij, Mundari and Kui tribal languages are mainly found in high proportion in Baleshwar and Nilagiri subdivisions. The concentration of non-tribal languages, viz., Oriya, Urdu, Bengali, Hindi and Telugu are more in Baleshwar and Bhadrak subdivisions than in Nilagiri.

*Census of India, Orissa, 1931, Table on House and Disabled Population, p. 39.

The following table gives the distribution of population according to language in Baleshwar district as per the 1981 Census*.

Name of mother-tongue (1)	No. of speakers (2)	Percentage to total population (3)
Oriya ..	1,979,246	88.31
Urdu ..	84,657	3.78
Santali ..	62,663	2.80
Bengali ..	58,837	2.62
Munda ..	14,398	0.64
Hindi ..	7,326	0.33
Bhumij ..	6,504	0.29
Kui ..	5,824	0.26
Mundari ..	5,594	0.25
Others ..	16,155	0.72
Total ..	2,241,204	100.00

The main spoken language of the district is Oriya which is the language of literature, business and correspondence. The tribal language speakers live in close contact with speakers of non-tribal language speakers. They have adopted Oriya, Hindi and Bengali languages to some extent. The amount of admixture varies from place to place. Due to spread of education and cultural contact, a number of persons speak a language subsidiary to their mother-tongue. Oriya is the most important subsidiary language of all the non-Oriya speakers in the district. Hindi, Bengali English and Santali are the other important subsidiary languages.

Scripts

Oriya is the predominant language and is spoken as mother-tongue throughout the district. For obvious reasons the people use Oriya scripts in their day-to-day life. In olden days some letters of the Oriya alphabet were written in a different scripts known as *Karani* to facilitate writing on the palm-leaf with the help of a stylus. Most of the old Oriya records and palm-leaf manuscripts made use of the *Karani* script.

* A Portrait of Population, Orissa, 1981, pp. 248—96.

The people speaking other Indian languages use their respective standard scripts.

The tribals who speak Santali, Kol, Bhumij, Mundari, Kui and other tribal languages generally use Oriya script while writing their dialects.

RELIGION

The Hindus are the majority in the district. They are followed by the Muslims and the Christians. The strength of other followers are negligible in the district. The following table presents the distribution of population by religion as per the 1981 Census*.

Name of the religion	Number of followers			Percentage to total population
	Rural	Urban	Total	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Hindus ..	2,009,227	1,43,429	2,152,656	95.55
Muslims ..	49,413	40,208	89,621	3.98
Christians ..	2,721	1,516	4,237	0.19
Sikhs ..	46	108	154	0.01
Buddhists ..	..	29	29	N
Jains ..	14	121	135	0.01
Other religions and persuasions	5,361	552	5,913	0.26
Religion not stated ..	63	..	63	N

It is seen from the table that less numerous communities have flourished mainly in the urban areas and numerically preponderant communities in the rural areas. It is also evident from the census report that the rate of growth of the Hindu population has decreased and that of Muslims, Christians and other religions increased during the decade 1971-81.

*Census of India, 1981, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household, pp. 44-47.

N means negligible.

Hinduism

In 1981, 95.55 per cent of the people in the district professed Hinduism. Among the Hindus some of the people are tribals. They follow Animism. In course of time their religion has been blended with Hinduism. The process of assimilation appears to be due to cultural contact. They worship stones in the deep forest. They usually offer uncooked food to stones which they called deities. After arrival of the civilised Aryans the situation changed. The Aryans discarded the process and began worshipping carved stone images and offered cooked food to the deities. This two-fold worship co-exists not only in Baleshwar but also in other districts of the state. The common people worship their shapeless stone deities with simple rites in the open air. By the side of the deities, temples are found where carved images are worshipped with elaborate rites. These stocks and stones are called Grama Devati or Thakurani. Every village pays homage to these deities and worship her as the tutelary goddess of their small community. The shapeless stone goddesses are smeared with vermilion and surrounded by smaller pieces of stone which represent her children. These are also vermilion-daubed and shapeless. In some places the trunk of some trees supposed to possess supernatural properties are smeared with vermilion and worshipped as the village goddess. Usually the Grama Devatis are worshipped by the non-priestly castes, viz., the Bhandari, Mali, Raul or Dhoba. The deities are worshipped daily but it is held with great pomp and ceremony on the Mahastami day of the Durga Puja. The deities are also worshipped on special occasions like outbreak of epidemic, famine, etc. The priests get remuneration from the villagers for their services.

The people in the villages believe in Kalasi. Kalasi is a man or woman who is periodically possessed by the spirit of a deity and pronounces inspired oracles. When a person is being influenced by Thakurani or spirit of a deity, he begins to tremble with dishevelled hair. At that time he tells the wishes and decrees of the Thakurani to the public. When the spirit leaves, the person again act as a common man or woman.

In certain villages goddesses are regarded as "Parama Vaishnavis" or devoted followers of Vishnu and animal sacrifices are not allowed before them. Probably owing to the spread of Vaishnavism, such sacrifices are only made sparingly before the other goddesses. But on the Mahastami day of Durga Puja and other special Pujas offered in fulfilment of vows, animals are generally sacrificed. Some domesticated birds and animals like fowls, goats and sheep are dedicated to the local goddess.

The Hindus are polytheists. They use to go to the temples of Siva, Narayan, Devi, etc., in the mornings and in the evenings. They worship their gods and goddesses with flowers and sandal paste singing Bhajans or hymns, ringing bells and holding lighted lamps. The worshippers receive holy water, leaves of Tulasi plant or Bel and Prasad. Generally in a Hindu household when a child is seriously ill, the parents make religious vows to offer special Puja before some deity for the recovery of the child and perform Puja in the prescribed manner. In case it is not done a fresh danger of a more serious magnitude is apprehended. Women also offer special Puja to deities in the hope of having male issues.

The Hindus worship the Sun-god daily while bathing and a libation of water is made in his honour. Many abstain from eating non-vegetarian diet on Sunday as it is the sacred day for Sun-god. The Earth is described as the holy mother of all living things and the giver of all good and is regarded as a benignant female deity. The people worship the Earth goddess during agricultural operations. Besides the Sun and the Earth, the planets like *Sani* and *Rahu* are also worshipped on certain occasions.

The Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), Banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*), Bel (*Aegle marmelos*), mango (*Mangifera indica*), Anla (*Phyllanthus emblica*), Duba (*Cynodom dactylon*), Asoka (*Janesia asoka saraca indica*), Barkuli (*zezyphus*), Bakul (*Minusops elengi*) and Tulasi (holy basil) are held sacred by the Hindus. In almost every Hindu household there is a *chaura* or a sacred place where Tulasi plant is planted and worshipped. Every evening lighted wicks are offered by the housewife before the *chaura*,

The Commissioner, Hindu Religion Endowment, Orissa, has recorded six hundred Hindu religious institutions in Baleshwar district. Subdivision-wise break-up are given below :

Subdivision	Number of Hindu Religious Institutions
Baleshwar	296
Bhadrak	214
Nilagiri	90
Total	600

Saivism

Lord Siva is one of the trinity of the Hindu pantheon. He possessed benign qualities. For this Siva has become a very popular God among the common people. Usually Siva is represented by the phallic symbol, the Linga and the Yoni enshrined in the temple. Siva shrines with Siva's trident at the top adorn many villages in the district. Of the Siva temples, the temple at Aradi, Baleshwar, Chandaneswar and Ayodhya are well-known and attract large number of visitors. It is believed that persons bitten by snake are cured, if they are brought to the temple of Akhandalamani Mahadeb at Aradi. It is reckoned as one of the chief centres of Siva worship in the district. Baneswar Mahadeb at Baleshwar is also important. The name of the town Baleshwar is believed to be a corruption of Baneswar, the name derived from the Siva temple of Lord Baneswar. The village Chandaneswar in Baleshwar subdivision contains a temple dedicated to Chandaneswar Mahadeb who is believed to have the power of curing diseases. With the hope of being cured, sick persons go to the temple and lie prostrate for days together before the image observing a rigorous fast.

Sivaratri is the principal festival of Lord Siva. The orthodox devotees mark three horizontal lines of sandal wood paste on their forehead as religious mark and wear '*Rudrakshya mala*' round their neck to identify their sect.

Saktism

Sakti is worshipped in several forms of which Bhadrakali near Bhadrak, Kali at Bhadrak, Ankudasuni at Guagadia, Brahmani at Avana, Tara at Ayodhya, Baseli Thakurani at Badagan near Soro, Sarbamangala Devi at Kasiari near Jaleshwar and Durga at Remuna are mainly important. Sakti is also worshipped in the villages in the form of folk goddesses. The blessings of the deities are invoked in wedding and other ceremonial occasions and at the time of sickness. To please the deity animals, viz., goats and fowls are sacrificed on any Sakti shrines of the district specially on the Mahastami day of the Durga Puja.

Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism spread in Orissa during the Ganga period and is the prevailing religion even to-day. The principal villages of the district has one or more temples dedicated to Vishnu in his popular form—Jagannath and his two companions Balabhadra and Subhadra. The existence of the temples and Mathas have exerted much influence on the popular faith. A number of

Vaishnava saints and prophets have visited Orissa to propagate their cult and founded Mathas but the chief prophet of Vaishnavism is Shri Chaitanya. He made Vaishnavism the religion of the masses.

Shri Chaitanya was a great reformer and his cult represents a revulsion against the gross and debasing religion of the Tantras. He accepted followers from all sections of the society irrespective of caste and vehemently opposed the practice of animal sacrifice. A peculiarity of Chaitanya's cult is that the post of the spiritual guide or *gossain* is not confined to the Brahmins only.

Though he was born at Navadvipa, he had spent the best part of his life in Puri, Orissa. During his journey to Puri he had passed through Jaleshwar and Remuna of Balashwar district. Other places of this district associated with his memory are Amarda, Sundarkuli and Sainthia near Bhadrak. A list of Mathas and temples dedicated to Shri Chaitanya in Balashwar district is given below*.

Name of Mathas/Temples	Place
1 Chaitanya-Nityananda	Mangalpur, P. O. Soro
2 Chaitanya	Nuagan, P. O. Bankipara
3 Chaitanya-Nityananda	Dayisingh, P. O. Kaupur
4 Chaitanya—Jin	Totapada, P. O. Ghanteswar
5 Chaitanya Mahaprabhu	Basudebpur
6 Nitaj Gaur	Bhadrak
7 Chaitanya Mahaprabhu	Mahapada
8 Chaitanya-Nityananda	Damodarapur near Balashwar

Mahima Dharma

The founder of Mahima Dharma or Alekha Dharma is Mahima Gossain. His disciples believe that he is an incarnation of Param Brahma. The main centre of this religion is at Joranda in Dhenkanal district. Abadhuta Biswanath Das Baba is the living head of the cult. **Abadhuta Sanyasis of Mahima cult visit different places of the Balashwar district and preach Mahima Dharma. A large number of followers are found at Bhadrak, Balashwar, Khaira, Bant, Soro, Jaleshwar, Baliapal and Langaleswar. Alekha Tungis and Ashramas are also found in these places. A detailed account of this cult can be found in Orissa District Gazetteer, Dhenkanal (1972).

* History of the Chaitanya Faith in Orissa by Prabhat Mukherjee, 1979, p. 114.

** Abadhuta Biswanath Das Baba passed away on the 16th May, 1992.

Christianity

According to 1981 Census, 0.19 per cent of the total population of the district profess Christianity. This proportion is relatively low in comparison to other districts. Sundargarh district has the largest percentage (15.91) of Christians and Dhenkanal the lowest (0.09). It is also learnt that the Christian population of the district has increased by 60.43 per cent during the decade 1971-81.

Mainly two denominations, viz., the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Roman Catholic Mission are found in the district. The former Mission started work in Baleshwar in 1836. It has also stations at Chandbali, Bhadrak, Chardia, Nilagiri, Kundupur, Hatigarh, Jaleshwar, Kusudia, Betnasia, Ujurda, Bansbonia, Rangiam and Mitrapur. The work of the mission is now supervised by the Christian Service Society whose head office is at Sepoy Bazar, Midnapur, West Bengal. Church programmes of the mission are carried on through preaching to non-Christians and programmes of moral development through meetings and conferences.

The mission runs a number of educational institutions in the district. Of these, the name of Baleshwar Technical School; Christian High School, Baleshwar; Mission Girls' High School, Baleshwar; Mission Upper Primary School, Baleshwar; Deaf and Dumb School, Baleshwar; Hatigarh High School and Hatigarh M. E. School may be specially mentioned. Miss S. Powers of the mission is in charge of the Deaf and Dumb School. She is also the Secretary of the Mission Girls' High School and U. P. School, Baleshwar.

Medical programmes of the mission are carried on through Nekursini Christian Hospital, Midnapur. The hospital conducts clinics for leprosy patients at Hatigarh in Baleshwar district. Mobile clinics of the said hospital also go to different places of the district to treat patients.

Rev. B. E. Weidman and Mrs. P. J. Weidman of the mission took interest in Rural Development Programmes and taught farmers about the scientific method of cultivation of rice, wheat and pisciculture. They supplied seeds, plants and fertilisers for cultivation. They also provided wells for drinking water.

The Roman Catholic Mission is functioning at Baleshwar, Mitrapur, Basta, Jaleshwar and Hatigarh. Besides preaching, the mission runs an orphanage.

Islam

Islam numerically was the third most important religion in the state in 1981. It has the highest concentration in Baleshwar district (3.97 per cent). Next in order are Cuttack (3.63 per cent), Sundargarh

(2.32 per cent) and Puri (2.16 per cent). They constitute less than one per cent of the population in the district of Phulabani, Dhenkanal, Balangir, Kalahandi, Ganjam, Koraput, Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj and Kendujhar.

In Balashwar district, Muslims are found mostly in the subdivisions of Balashwar and Bhadrak. They have constructed mosques in a number of places to offer prayer. The distribution of mosques, spiritual shrines, grave-yards and idgahs are given below.*

Sl. No.	Name of police-station	No. of Masjids	No. of spiritual shrines	No. of grave-yards	No. of Idgahs
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Balashwar ..	31	51	13	2
2	Remuna ..	7	8	4	..
3	Basta ..	12	21	6	2
4	Baliapal ..	4	25	5	1
5	Singala ..	5	4	4	..
6	Jalashwar —	6	11	9	2
7	Bhograi ..	10	15	5	2
8	Raibania ..	14	1	2	1
9	Soro ..	8	19	11	1
10	Similia ..	9	16	2	1
11	Khaira .	3	8	5	2
12	Bhadrak ...	45	85	112	3
13	Tihidi ...	7	13	3	1
14	Bant ..	6	11	3	1
15	Basudebpur ..	8	22	5	—
16	Dhamnagar ..	18	34	18	4
17	Chandbali ..	5	4	2	—
18	Nilagiri ..	..	..	1	..
Total		185	348	210	23

*Commissioner of Wakfs, Orissa, Cuttack.

The Jama Masjid at Sunhat (Baleshwar town) is the oldest mosque in the district. It was constructed during the reign of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor.

The majority of the Muslims belong to Suni sect. There are also Ahemadia Muslims in the district.

There are two most important Muslim shrines in the district. One is Shah Swaleh Mohammed popularly Known as Bhujakhia Pir in Baleshwar town. Both Hindus and Muslims offer 'Sirini' in the shrine with devotion. Another shrine at Dhamnagar has come up recently after the death of Moulana Habibur Rahman, a Muslim saint. The devotees from all over the country come to this place for 'Ziarat'. At the time of annual Urs' about 2 to 3 lakhs devotees assemble at Dhamnagar for "Fateha' and 'Sirini'.

Sikhism

The Sikhs numbered 154 according to the Census of 1981. They are mostly found in Baleshwar and Bhadrak. The Sikhs believe in one God and is a classless and casteless society. They follow the teachings of the ten Gurus and the saints enshrined in the Holy Book of the Sikhs, the 'Granth Sahib'. The followers of this religion have constructed one Gurudwara within the limits of Proof and Experimental centre at Chandipur. This is run by the Defence Services staff and they celebrate all the important festivals of the Sikh religion. There is another Gurudwara which has come up in 1970 on the National Highway No. 5 at the crossing of the road to Remuna. This is named as Gurudwara Sahib. It is managed by the local Sikhs. There is a priest who looks after the rituals. They also run a Charitable Homeopathic Dispensary in the Gurudwara.

At Bhadrak there is a temple called Gurudwar Satsang. It is said that Guru Nanak during his travels in this part of the country took rest here. One of the devotees has been maintaining this spot, for his memory. Towards 1972, the Sikhs of Bhadrak converted this hamlet into a pucca Gurudwara.

Buddhism

Buddhist monuments are found at Avana, Ayodhya, Kaupur, Kharipada, Kupari and Sohanpur in the district. But in 1981 Census 29 persons are found to have professed this religion.

Jainism

There were 135 Jains in the district as per 1981 Census. They are mainly immigrants from outside the state. Bhimpur, Charampa and Manikchak are important centres of Jainism in Baleshwar district.

CASTES

Caste plays an important role in the socio-economic life of the people of the district. For a detailed description of each caste, caste-wise population figures are essential. But since 1951, no enumeration in regard to different castes is being made in the censuses. In the absence of such statistics much of the valuable information relating to the life and economy of the people could not be incorporated in the present work. However, a brief account of different castes is given below.

Aswini Tanti

They belong to the weaving caste and were skilled weavers in the past. In course of time due to competition with millmade cloths they could not prosper in their economic pursuit. Nowadays some of them are following other avocations to improve their living standard.

Badhei

The Badheis belong to the Biswakarma community which also includes Kamars and Pathurias. The Badheis, Kamaras and Pathurias work on wood, iron and stone respectively. They worship Biswakarma, the Maker of the Universe. Marital relationship within the three groups, viz., Badhei, Kamar and Pathuria are allowed.

Bania

The Banias are makers of gold and silver ornaments. They also prepare anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines. Two types of Banias are noticed in the district. They are Putuli Bania and Sunari Bania. The strength of the latter is more than the former.

Bhandari

The Bhandaris are known as Barika or Napitas. They are barbers by profession. The services of male and female barbers are indispensable on the occasions of marriage, birth and death. They get remuneration both in cash and kind. They are generally divided into three classes, viz., Kanamuthia, Chamamuthia and Lamahata. The Kanamuthia barber carries his

hair-cutting and saving implements in a bag of cloth whereas the Chamamuthia carries them in a leather bag. And the Lamahata barber carries the lighted torches (Masals) on ceremonial occasions. Some of them have abandoned traditional pattern and maintain hair-cutting saloons in different localities.

Brahmin

The Brahmins, though not very numerous, are a very important caste in the district due to their high social status. They are divided into several sub-castes of which Sasani, Sarua or Paniari, Panda, Pujari or Deulia, Marhia and Mastani Brahmins are important. The Sasani Brahmins act as priests, spiritual guides and teachers. The Sarua or Paniari Brahmins grow and sell vegetables. The Panda, Pujak or Deulia Brahmins are professional temple worshippers. They also work as cooks. The Marhias are priests of lower castes. The Mastans indulge in non-Brahmanical occupations. The titles of this category of Brahmins mark them out as a class quite distinct from the rest of the Brahmins. They are also called Balaram Gotri Brahmins.

The Brahmins of the district are continuing their traditional professions till today. Due to pressure on purse some of them have adopted other professions. All Brahmins observe ten Samskaras (rites) at different stages of life. These rites are believed to purify a person. Generally during Upanayan most of the rites are performed. Recitation of Vedas, worship of Brahma in Trisandhya, performance of Yangya, etc., are part of their routine work. The Sasani Brahmins do not establish marital relationship with the Sarua, Panda, Pujari, Marhia and Mastani Brahmins.

Dagra

It is a small caste peculiar to Baleshwar who are found chiefly in the areas under Bhadrak and Dhamnagar police-station. The term Dagra means 'a messenger'. It is believed that the Dagrars were postal runners either during Muslim rule or under the Marathas. Since that period they acquired considerable *jagirs* known as Ara Dagrai. Most of them are cultivators, but in Bhadrak some are hereditary holders of proprietary tenures. It is said that they were brought from Nagpur by the Marathas. Others allege that they are connected with the Dagrars of upper India. They bear the same titles as Chasas and it may therefore be surmised that they are a functional off-shoot from that caste.

Gauda

The Gaudas are found more or less in all the Tahasils of the district. Regarding their sub-castes, ornaments and occupations O' Malley states "there are several sub-castes of which the Mathurapuria ranks highest in Balasore, because its members do not carry the *palki*. The Gopapuria sub-caste is noticeable for the fact that its female members are almost the only women in Orissa who do not wear nose ornaments, a circumstance which they pretend, connects them with Krishna's mythical milkmaids. The young women of both sub-castes prepare butter and *ghi* which the elder ones take round for sale with their milk. Field labour of all kinds is eschewed by the Gauda women. The sub-caste known as Magadha ranks last and is probably a recent accretion from some aboriginal tribes."* The observation made by O'Malley is not correct nowadays. The spread of education has changed the fashion and occupation of the people. Differences between sub-castes have also shrunk.

The Gaudas worship Lord Shri Krishna. They pay reverence to the cow. Dola Purnima on full moon day in the month of Phalguna (February-March) is their main festival.

Guria

Gurias prepare sweetmeats. It is their traditional occupation. But most of them have given up their caste profession and have adopted other avocations. Generally food cooked by them are accepted by all. Lord Ganesh is their tutelary deity. The main festival of the caste is Ganesh Chaturthi.

Kachara

The traditional occupation of the Kachara caste is to sell glass bangles (Kacha). They also deal with brass and bell-metal utensils prepared by the Kansari/Thatari castes. They are generally found in Bhadrak, Chandbali, Paramanandapur, Bidyadhar-pur, Tihidi, Pirhat, Kupari, Soro, Basta, Dhamnagar and Baleshwar,

The caste enjoys the ministrations of Brahmins on socio-religious functions. They worship the brass scale on the Dasahara day. A Matha named "Kalinga Kachara Matha" at Balagandi Sahi in Puri town has been established by the people of this community since 1901.

Karan

The Karans are the writer caste of the district, but there are many among them who are zamindars, tenure holders or landlords. They are influential people in the district. They are divided into four sects, viz, the Krishnatreya, Sankhyayana, Bharadwaj and Naga. Marriage

*L. S. S. O' Malley, Bengal District Gazetteer, Balasore, 1907.

In the caste is regulated according to the customs in vogue among the higher castes.

Kansari

The Kansaris derived their name from *Kansa* (bell-metal). They are found in Baleshwar, Similia, Khaira, Soro, Remuna, Basta, Raibania, Bhadrak, Dhamnagar, Tihidi, Chandbali, Basudebpur, Nilagiri and Berhampur police-stations of the district. But their concentration is more in Remuna than in other police-stations. Brass and bell-metal industry is the main-stay of the people. Brahmin priests officiate in their socio-religious functions. They worship brass scale and its weights on the Dasahara day.

Khandayat

The Khandayats are by far the largest caste in the district. Their name is derived from the Oriya word *Khanda*, a sword. The other view is that Orissa was formerly divided into Khandas or groups of villages corresponding to the *Pargana* of Muslim period. Each *Khanda* was governed by a headman called *Khandapati*, which was subsequently corrupted to Khandayat. Whatever may be the etymology of the name, it is admitted that the Khandayats belong to the warrior class and are the descendants of the people who formed the landed militia under the ancient Rajas of Orissa. As members of the militia, the Khandayats had to serve as soldiers in times of war, and in return they were given lands under strictly military tenure. Their characteristic occupation have changed due to change of time. They have now adopted other avocations.

Dasahara has a special significance to the warrior caste. They worship their old weapons of war and exhibit physical feats on this occasion. Their heroic forbears used to start on fresh military expeditions during this season of the year.

Khitibansa or Matibansa

The people of this community are found mainly in the villages under Bant, Bhadrak, Dhamnagar Tihidi, Chandbali, Soro and Jaleshwar police-stations of the district. The community is divided into three sections mostly on the basis of the occupations they follow. The Khitibansa or Matibansa Abadhans used to teach children in *Chatasalis* or village schools. A section of the community take *Mangala*, the goddess of smallpox, from door to door and thereby earn their living. Another section took to weaving. There was no marital relationship between the different sections, but these restrictions are not followed strictly in the present society. They worship Adishakti. Their caste symbol is *Khadi*, a piece of soapstone.

Kshatriya

In caste hierarchy the Kshatriyas stand second to the Brahmins. Their strength is few in the district. They are found chiefly in Nilagiri subdivision. They belong to the warrior caste and observe *upanayan*. The ex-rulers of Nilagiri claim to be Suryavamsi Kshatriyas like the ex-rulers of Mayurbhanj. They use Bhanja as surname to their family title.

Kumbhar

The Kumbhars are potters. The term Kumbhars derived from the Sanskrit word *Kumbhakara-Kumbha*(water jar) and *Kara* (*maker*). They prepare and sell various types of earthenware, such as pot, toy, plate, *Dhupadani, Dipa, Chilam*, etc. They earn by selling these materials in the local market. Their service in this respect is indispensable. They observe *Kurala Panchami* and *Odhana sathi* on the 5th and 6th day respectively of the bright fortnight of the month of Pausa (December-January). On this ceremonial occasion they also worship their implements.

Mali

The Mali means gardener. Selling of flowers and garlands is their principal occupation. Due to meagre income from their customary calling, most of them have adopted other professions to earn their livelihood.

Natha Yogi

The Natha Yogis live on begging from door to door with a gourd vessel. Conventionally they sing songs relating to the religious preacher Govinda Chandra, Data Karna and others by playing on a string instrument called Kendara. Their usual surname is Natha.

Nolia

The Nolias are fishermen. They mainly reside near the sea-coast. There are two sub-castes, viz., Jaliya and Khalasi. The former are fishermen and the latter work in sea-going vessels. The Nolias are followers of Ramanuja. They worship Baruna, the Hindu Neptune. Flowers and sweets are offered to Baruna before launching a boat. They are expert swimmers. They usually attend the surf-bathers on the sea-coast.

Patara

The Pataras are dealers in silk and cotton yarn. They string necklaces and sale Pata, Kasta, Pataphuli, Dhadia and Kardhuni. They are divided into four sub-castes, viz., Phulia, Talaria, Dandia and Jagati. They are Vaishnavas and specially venerate Lord Balabhadra. They worship the deity on the full-moon day in the

month of Shraban (July-August) called 'Gamha Purnima'. On this occasion they also worship their implements such as *Chhuri*, *Ankura*, *Pata*, etc.

Teli

The Telis deal in oil and are known as oil-men. They are also known as Kuberaputras or sons of Kubera, the God of Wealth. Among them three sub-castes are noticed. They are Haladia, Khari and Baldia or Thoria. The first two press oil by indigenous method and trade in it. The Baldia or Thoria Telis trade in turmeric which is carried from place to place with the aid of bullocks. But nowadays many have switched over to other professions and disparity among them have almost gone.

Raju

Among the castes of Orissa, the Raju caste of Baleshwar district goes by a distinctive characteristic of its own. Economically prosperous and socially advanced, this community lives in preponderant number in the northern portion of the district. The Rajus are also seen in great many number in the districts of Midnapur and 24 Pargana of West Bengal which were within the territorial limits of Orissa in earlier days. They also live in the district of Singhbhum as well as in the border regions of the present day Andhra Pradesh which formed a part of medieval Orissa.

The existence of this caste in the frontier regions of Orissa and not in its central areas have led some authorities to believe that these people were not the original inhabitants of Orissa, but that they came from outside, and settled permanently. This migration, of course, might have taken place several centuries ago, and the newcomers became Oriyas in due course of time.

While some scholars ascribe the origin of the Rajus to the "Rajukas" of the description in the Asokan Inscriptions, others trace their origin to the "Chandavat" and "Shuktavat" Kshatriyas of Rajputana who came to join the military services of Orissa's medieval monarchs and served on the frontier forces.

It is said that in earlier days the people of this caste carried a common surname 'Raju'. But later on, they adopted such surnames as Mahapatra, Kar, Chauhan, Chaudhury, Senapati, Sahani, Dandapat, Pradhan, Biswal, Giri, Brahma, Varma, Dutta, Chanda, Bhanja, Pal, Samal, Singha, Nandi, Nayak, Patra, Das, etc.

While in some Raju families the wearing of the 'Sacred Thread' still prevails as social system, in others the worship of swords and arms continue as a custom.

The Rajus have adopted agriculture, trade and business as their main occupational profession. In recent times, they are seen to be settling in other areas of Orissa, outside Baleshwar. They have extensive marital relationship with the Kshatriyas and the Khandayats of Orissa*.

Sualgiri

Sualgiris are found only in this district of Orissa. They inhabited in the villages of Sugo, Dhansimulia, Kalyanpur in Jaleshwar C. D. Block; Ramachandrapur, Madhupur, Mahagab, Agarda in Bhogra C. D. Block; and Manikpura, Ujuda, Padhiharipur, Gilajori and Mugal in Basta C. D. Block. In the Final Report on the Revision Settlement of Orissa (1922-1932 A. D.), W. W. Dalziel says "the community was found in Sugo and Dhansimulia villages in the District. They speak a peculiar language and eat the flesh of jackals". They worship 'Badam' as the Supreme Lord and at the same time believe in the Hindu Pantheon. In their social customs they have been immensely influenced by the Hindus. But they perform their religious rites with the help of their own community priests. In the past, they were nomads and hunting was their main occupation. Gradually, they have come to settle in villages permanently and have adopted several other occupations like cultivation, fishing, etc.

They have their own peculiar language for communication and they also speak Oriya. Their population is very limited. Only 100 persons live in Sugo and 200 persons in Dhansimulia, the two old settlements of the Sualgiri community in the district according to the assessment of the local Revenue Officers. Education has not spread much among them till now. On enquiry it was ascertained that only one boy of the community is a post-graduate from Utkal University.

Tambuli

Traditionally the Tambulis are betel-leaf sellers. It is believed that they have come from outside and became permanent inhabitants of the district since the Maratha period.

*Source—Professor Dr. M. N. Das, ex-Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University

SCHEDULED CASTES

In 1981*, the population of Scheduled Castes was 404,197 (204,747 males and 199,450 females). This constituted about 17.94 per cent of the total population of the district. Of the 54 Scheduled Castes returned in 1971**, the most numerous were Amant or Amat, Bagheti or Baghuti, Bariki, Bauri, Chamar, Dhoba, Dom, Ghusuria, Gokha, Hadi, Kandara, Kela, Kodalo, Kurunga, Mahuria, Mehtar, Namasudra, Pan, Pantanti, Patratanti and Ujia. The above 21 Scheduled Castes comprised 93.62 per cent of the total population of the Scheduled Castes in the district. A detailed list of Scheduled Castes is given in the Appendix I. Of the total Scheduled Castes 95.72 per cent live in rural areas and the rest in urban areas. The growth rate of Scheduled Castes in Baleshwar district during the decade (1971—81) was 19.30 per cent. That was higher than the state average of 16.75 per cent. Among the police-stations, Baleshwar tops the list with 42,257 persons and Berhampur ranks last with 1,963.

The literate and educated persons among the Scheduled Castes numbered 108,464 according to the Census of 1981. This was 26.83 per cent of their total population in the district. The analysis further revealed that 41.29 per cent of males and 11.99 per cent of the females were literate. This indicated that education has spread less among the females.

Bhadrak Tahasil claims the highest percentage of Scheduled Caste literates with 21.90 per cent followed by Soro Tahasil 17.76 per cent, Baleshwar Tahasil 12.18 per cent, Dhamnagar Tahasil 10.48 per cent, Basta Tahasil 10.34 per cent and Jaleshwar Tahasil 10.19 per cent. Nilagiri Tahasil claims the lowest literacy percentage of 3.95 per cent. This is also lower than the state average of 22.40 per cent.

Among the Scheduled Castes 29.70 per cent were main workers, 2.31 per cent recorded under marginal workers, and the rest non-workers. Cultivation and agricultural labour provided livelihood to bulk of the population.

*Census of India, Orissa, 1981, Paper-2 of 1982, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, pp. 52-60.

** The 1981 Census has recorded 77 Scheduled Castes in the district.

To raise the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes, Government have introduced I. R. D. P., E. R. R. P., N. R. E. P., C. A. D. A., M. A. D. A., T. R. Y. S. E. M., R. L. E. G. P., I. T. D. A., LAMP and Indira Awas Yojana. Details are given in chapter IX of this gazetteer.

Bariki

The Barikis are found mostly in the coastal districts of the state. They numbered 2,684 in Baleshwar district according to 1971 Census. Among them 25.11 per cent were found literate.

Bauri

The strength of the Bauris in the district was 1,194 in 1971. They reside mostly in the rural areas. They are divided into four sub-castes, viz., Mahabhoi, Tanhara, Ghumura and Buna. The Bauris are mainly agricultural labourers. Nowadays some of them have taken to other avocations. They do not employ Brahmin priests to perform rituals connected with birth, death and marriage. The Bauris have their own caste priest called Baishnab or Gosain. They have also their own barber. He is known as Behera. The posts of Gosain and Behera are hereditary. They do not depend on Dhobas for washing their polluted dress materials.

As regards education of the Bauris, it was found in 1971 Census that 9.21 per cent of their total population were literate. This indicates that education had not spread much among them.

Chamar

In 1971, the strength of Chamar, Mochi, Muchi or Satnami in the district was 13,268 (6,566 males and 6,702 females) of which 23.43 per cent were literate. The Chamaras deal with palm-leaf and household articles made of bamboo. They also prepare *tadi* from date-palm juice. The Mochis are skilled in tanning, curring of hides and skins. They prepare and mend shoes and slippers.

Dhoba

The population of Dhobas according to the 1971 Census was 39,883. Of the total population 38,555 persons live in rural areas. Their traditional occupation is washing of clothes and wood-cutting. On social occasions like birth and death, their services are indispensable. In 1971, 24.64 per cent were found literate among them.

Dom

In the 1971 Census 5,297 persons were recorded as Dom or Dombo of whom 673 or 12.70 per cent were found literate. They weave *Kula*, *Baunsia Tokei*, *Dala*, *Jhudi*, etc. from bamboo splits. They also act as drummers on ceremonial functions.

Ghusuria

The 1971 Census enumerated 2,231 (1237 males and 994 females) Ghusurias in Baleshwar district of which about 12.59 per cent were literate. They are found mainly in rural areas. Their traditional occupation is to rear pigs. They are not served by the Brahmin Priests. They have their own priests called Baishnab.

Gokha

The number of Gokhas in Baleshwar district according to 1971 Census was 54,338. This is 66.09 per cent of the total Gokha population of Orissa. Their customary calling is fishing. They use *Shalua*, made of bamboo sticks and do not generally fish with nets. In 1971, literacy among them was confined to 12,024 persons or 21.12 per cent.

Hadi

Out of 9,633 Hadis or Haris, 9,189 persons live in the rural and 444 in the urban areas of the district. They have their own community priests who perform social and religious functions. They clean latrines, drains and collect skins from the dead cows and buffaloes. They also act as scavengers. Among them literacy was confined to 16.43 per cent in 1971.

Kandara

The name Kandara is said to be derived from their skill in archery (Kanda means arrow) and in former times they and the Pans formed the rank and file of the local militia. They numbered 53,650 in the 1971 Census. Cultivation and agricultural labour provide livelihood to a bulk of the Kandara population. Most of the people in their society also worked as village Chaukidars. Among the Kandaras literacy was confined to 23.21 per cent in 1971.

Kela

The Kelas are mostly snake-charmers. Some have taken to agriculture. After harvesting is over they go to different parts of the state with their snakes kept in *pedi* and earn a living by snake charming and begging. They also invariably carry with them a trained mouse called "Govindi Musa" in a small box to entertain the people. The 1971 Census had recorded 2,583 Kelas in Baleshwar district. Of the total population, 14.78 per cent were found literate.

Kodalo or Khodalo

Out of 8,377 Kodalos or Khodalos in Orissa, 8,355 were enumerated in the district of Baleshwar. The rest were found in Koraput district. They usually live in rural areas.

As regards education, it was found in the Census of 1971 that 27.49 per cent of the Kodalos or Khodalos were literate.

Mahuria

More than 50 per cent of the Mahurias of Orissa live in Baleshwar district. Their name is derived from the wind instrument called Mahuri which they play on ceremonial occasions. In 1971 Census 18.93 per cent of them were found literate.

Namasudra

Out of 49,796 Namasudras in Orissa, 5,879 were enumerated in this district according to 1971 Census. This is the second highest in the state. Koraput district secured the highest position with 42,120 Namasudras and Phulabani (previously Boudh-Khondmals) district with only 4 persons occupied the lowest position. In Baleshwar district they are found mostly in villages under Bhograi, Jaleshwar, Basta and Baliapal police-stations. Fishing is their traditional occupation. At present they have taken to other trades for their living. They believe in Hinduism and perform all the religious rites by their own community priests. Incidence of literacy among them was confined to 28.25 per cent in 1971.

Pan

Out of 6,72,627 Pans or Panos in Orissa, 92,832 persons live in Baleshwar district according to 1971 Census. It is the most numerous Scheduled Caste but they are backward socially, educationally and economically. After independence some changes are noticed among them. More and more children of this community are getting education. As a result, 17.91 per cent were found literate among them in 1971. Their customary calling is said to be weaving, but they mostly work as day-labourers, drummers and cane-weavers. Many of them have also taken to cultivation. The village Chaukidars and postal runners were generally recruited from their ranks. Brahmins, Dhobas and Bhandaris do not serve them. They have their own caste Purohit who officiates in social functions.

Pantanti

The Census of 1971 returned 2,882 Pantantis in Baleshwar district. They live in rural areas and earn their livelihood by weaving clothes. Some of them have changed their customary calling and have adopted other avocations. They have not advanced much in education. In 1971, 19.95 per cent were found literate in their society.

Patratanti

According to the Census of 1971, the Patial, Patikar, Patratanti or Patua numbered 2,519 in the district. Though they earn their livelihood by weaving clothes, some of them depend on

other professions to supplement their income. In their society 23.08 per cent were found literate in 1971. Like other Hindus they worship gods and goddesses and observe festivals.

Ujia

In 1971 Census, 12,143 persons were returned as Ujias in Baleshwar district. Of the total number only one male member is found in urban area. Catching and selling fish are their mainstay. Literacy was confined to 1,330 or 10.95 per cent in their society. Like Gokhas and Keutas they celebrate *chaitra parba* as their caste festival.

SCHEDULED TRIBES

The population of the Scheduled Tribes in the district was 1,54,153 in 1981. This constituted 6.84 per cent of the total population of the district. Of the 40 Scheduled* Tribes found in Baleshwar district, numerically important tribes were Santal, Bhumij, Kolha, Bathudi, Munda, Shabar or Lodha, Bhuinya, Sounti, Oraon, Kharia, Saora, Mundari and Dharua. These 13 tribes together constituted 77.01 per cent of the total tribal population of the district in 1971. A detailed list of the Scheduled Tribes is given in Appendix II.

The growth rate of Scheduled Tribes population in the district during the decade 1961-71 was 34.57 per cent. But the decade 1971-81 recorded a nominal growth rate of 16.19 per cent. Compared to the growth rate of 16.62 per cent for the Scheduled Tribes population of the state during the decade 1971-81, the growth rate of the Scheduled Tribes in the district appeared to be not too high.

Concentration of the Scheduled Tribes was the highest in Nilagiri Tahasil (50,420) and the lowest in Basudebpur Tahasil (415). The police-stations, such as, Baleshwar (20,328), Raibania (15,314), Basta (12,212), Nilagiri (28,937), and Berhampur (21,483) claimed comparatively more tribal population than the other police-stations of the district.

They are also found in Jaleshwar town (9.53 per cent), Baleshwar town (7.87 per cent), Bhadrak town (3.83 per cent), Chandbali town (3.47 per cent) and Soro town (3.06 per cent) and least in Basudebpur town (0.25 per cent). High concentration of Scheduled Tribes in the first three towns may be due to employment facilities.

According to 1981 Census, out of the total Scheduled Tribes population 43.88 per cent were main workers, 5.13 per cent marginal workers and 50.99 per cent non-workers. Among the main workers majority of the persons were engaged in agricultural occupations.

*The 1981 Census has recorded 53 Scheduled Tribes in the district.

In 1981, the literate and educated persons among the Scheduled Tribes numbered 17,275, i.e., 11.20 per cent of their total population in the district. The analysis revealed that 19.34 per cent of the males and 2.90 per cent of the females were literate. This indicated that education has spread very little among the females.

The census report of 1981 enumerated 146,771 Hindus and 839 Christians among the Scheduled Tribes. This indicates that the tribals of Baleshwar are almost all followers of Hinduism. Other religions have very little impact on the Scheduled Tribes of the district. They worship the Hindu gods and goddesses excepting those who have lived comparatively isolated for a long time. They usually believe in ancestral spirits and a number of malevolent spirits.

The spread of education, communication facilities and implementation of various development schemes have helped the Scheduled Tribes to change their traditional manners and customs.

To protect and control atrocities on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, Government have taken steps and filed cases under Public Civil Rights Act. Statistics in this respect is given in Appendix III of this chapter.

Bhumij

The 1971 census enumerated 27,793 (13,992 males and 13,801 females) Bhumij in Baleshwar district of which about 7.89 per cent were literate. They are found mainly in the rural areas. They live in Kutcha houses with mud walls and thatched roofs.

They are divided into five categories, viz., Bara Bhumia Bhumij, Teli Bhumij, Tamadia Bhumij, Desua Bhumij, and Haladipokharia Bhumij. In Nilagiri subdivision most of the Bhumij belong to Haladipokharia category. The Bhumij usually marry late in life. This is due to financial reasons. Bride price and the over-all expenditure in a marriage are too heavy for a Bhumij to bear. It demands years of savings and patient preparation. They follow four forms of marriages, viz., (i) the usual type of arranged marriage through negotiation, (ii) Daw dopa or love marriage, (iii) Sindurigesa or marriage by compulsion and (iv) Apartipi or marriage by capture. Of those, arranged marry is generally followed. Divorce is permissible in Bhumij society but the divorced women cannot remarry until the approval of the village elders is obtained by the parents of both parties. Polygamy is practised among the Bhumij. All things will go well if the marrying partners belong to the Bhumij community. The penal provision is heavy if either of the parties belongs to a different

community. Usually they observe and follow the Hindu social customs in case of births and deaths. The Bhumij generally bury the dead and in rare cases the dead body is burnt.

Sing Bonga is the Supreme being of the Bhumij. They believe in superstitions. A Bhumij will not proceed in his journey concerning a marriage negotiation if he comes across a man easing himself or if he finds a branch falling from a tree or a dog barking. Sight of oil is considered inauspicious. These beliefs are slowly fading under long and constant contact with the caste-population.

Makar Parba (Makara Sankranti) is the most important festival of the Bhumij and with this their new year starts. This festival is observed in the month of Pousa (December-January). They observe Harpuna festival in April for sowing seeds. It synchronises with the Akshayatriya day when Hindus also sow seeds. Another very important festival of the Bhumij is Saharai when members of the tribe enjoy considerable freedom in revelry and merry-making. The festival is usually observed for four days in the month of November.

The 1971 Census has recorded 8,895 workers and 2,277 non-workers among the Bhumijis. The distribution of workers are given below* :

Workers (1)	Male (2)	Female (3)	Total (4)
(i) Cultivator ..	2,228	49	2,277
(ii) Agricultural labourer	3,084	1,791	4,875
(iii) Livestock, forestry, fishing and plantations, orchards and allied activities	130	61	191
(iv) Mining and quarrying	244	291	535
(v) Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs—			
(a) Household Industry	62	31	93
(b) Other than Household Industry	203	148	351
(vi) Construction ..	2	—	2
(vii) Trade and commerce	18	9	27
(viii) Transport, storage and communications	71	28	99
(ix) other services ..	336	109	445

*Census of India, Orissa, 1971, part-V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, p. 396 and p. 450.

It is seen from the above figures that agriculture and agricultural labour are the principal occupations of the Bhumij.

Santal

The Santal is one of the principal tribes of the state of Orissa. They are found in all the thirteen districts of the state. But their concentration is heavy in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Baleshwar and Kendujhar. In the Baleshwar district they are noticed mainly in the areas under Jaleshwar and Nilagiri Tahasils. According to the 1971 Census* they numbered 46,921 (22,855 males and 24,066 females). Of the total number 43,975 persons live in rural areas and the rest in urban areas.

The Santal village is very neat and clean. Generally a road runs between two rows of houses. The houses are strongly built. Its mud walls and floors are so nicely plastered with cowdung that it presents a smooth and polished surface. The Santal women are skilled in painting. They paint the walls and floors with floral designs and geometric patterns using white, black, red and yellow colours. They prepare black colour from burnt straw and collect other colours from local soils. To make these colours shining and lasting they add the glue from a local tree.

As regards household articles a Santal's possession is very few. Earthenware vessels are generally used in cooking and for storing water. Use of brass and aluminium pots are seen among the well to do Santals.

Men wear napkins and Dhotis while women wear mill-made saris. Use of blouse and inner petticoat have become very popular among the young girls. Use of shirt, short and banian is gaining popularity among the young boys. The Santals use very few ornaments. "Hansli" a kind of necklace is a favourite ornament for the adult women though they invariably wear necklaces of beads. The Santals in the past were using bangles made of brass but now using *chudi* made of silver or glass. Among them no tattoo mark is found in any part of the body.

The Santals eat boiled rice, vegetables, meat, fish, fried rice and *chuda*. *Handia* (rice beer) and country liquor are the favourite alcoholic drinks of the tribe.

The principal occupation of the Santals is agriculture. They grow paddy, maize, Bajara, Kulthi and other cereals. When the production is less, they take other professions like collection of

*Census of India, Orissa, 1971, Part-II-C (i), p. 267.

leaves, wood and fruits from the forest and sale in the nearby villages and weekly markets. In case of scarcity and non-availability of forest produces Santals go out to work as daily labourers in the field and also work under the contractors. Rope-making and leaf plate making are taken as part time job. At times they go out for hunting and fishing. They use bows and arrows for hunting. They have a large assortment of arrows. These are designed for shooting birds, animals and fish. The Santals have also a number of other hunting implements, fishing nets, etc., All these go to show that they have studied the nature and habits of wild animals, birds and so forth and have fashioned their implements accordingly.

The Santal women are treated with respect in the community. The mother, mother-in-law and grand mother-in-law are held in respect. The married women are never subjected to any form of misbehaviour. The women folk of the community have the freedom of mixing freely with the men in social functions and day to day life. There is no Purdah. The Panchayat protects them against any form of oppression. Ploughing the paddy field is the duty of the male section. Sustained labour and intensive work like digging soil, cutting wood, bringing goods on shoulder, etc., are usually done by male members. The woman folk generally fetch water, collect fuel and leaves and cook. They look to all household affairs like preparing rice beer and country liquor. The Santal women take care of the children and the domestic animals. Marketing is usually done by the female folk.

They speak a dialect called Santali. This is their mother-tongue. But most of them are able to read and write in Oriya. They also use Bengali and Devnagari scripts. In lieu of different scripts they feel that one common script is necessary for the greater interest of their solidarity. So Raghunath Murmu, an eminent Santal, prepared a common script called "Ol chiki". It has been accepted by all the Santals. The 1971 census* has recorded 27,951 speakers in Santali language in Baleshwar district.

As regards their education, the 1971** census has registered 44,177 illiterates and 2,744 literates among them. The incidence of literacy is thus limited to 5.85 per cent. In their society only 45 persons are found to have possessed matriculation and above qualification.

* A Portrait of Population, Orissa, B. Tripathy, Census of India, 1971, p. 248.

** Census of India, Orissa, 1971, Part-V-A Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, p-600 and 634.

The Santals have been divided into 12 main sections according to political, spiritual and social functions of the community. The sections are as follows:

1. Kisku .. This section of the Santals once upon a time were kings in the area they dwelt.
2. Hansdah ... This section of people were assisting Kisku in running the state. They are known as "Pururdhul" the learned men.
3. Hembram .. Most learned persons in the society and are known as "Karji", the judge.
4. Soren .. The warriors
5. Tudu .. The Musicians
6. Marandi .. The wealthiest people
7. Murmu .. The sacred people who perform religious functions.
8. Besera .. The dancers
9. Baske } Functions of these sections are not commonly known to the present Santal society. The sections noted at serial Nos. 10, 11 and 12 are not found in Baleshwar district.
10. Chone }
11. Dandar }
12. Gandar }

Santals generally use "Majhi" as their surname. The word "Majhi" is derived from "Manjhi" the village headman. As education spreads, the enlightened Santals are changing their surname from Majhi to the respective section name such as Kisku, Hansdah, Soren, Tudu, Marandi, Murmu and Hembram.

In their society an individual can marry into any other section except his own and sex relation between members of the same section are regarded as incestuous.

The Santals have made the marriage procedure simple and added some more qualities to their customs according to the local conditions in Baleshwar district.

Among the Santals, marriage is usually arranged by the parents. Marriage initiative is always taken by the boy's parents. Selected persons from the bridegroom's side first go to the house of the bride. They see the bride and discuss matters relating to marriage. If they are satisfied, they invite the bride's side to their house. When

both the parties agree, the bride price is finalised, and the marriage date is fixed. After the payment of bride price, the bride is taken to the bridegroom's house on the appointed day by the help of bullock cart, motor vehicles or by any other means according to the financial condition of the parents. Then the *Sindura Dan* ceremony takes place. The bridegroom in his right hand applies *Sindur* or vermilion on the forehead of the bride. After this, they became husband and wife.

Nowadays, in Baleshwar district, the bridegrooms have started demanding from the parents of the bride radio, wrist watch, cycle, etc., as dowry. Their demands are also fulfilled in most cases. The relatives and villagers co-operate in the marriage. They are entertained with Handia (rice-beer). This is known as 'Biheet' by the Santals.

When a baby is born, the woman is kept in isolation. She is attended by an elderly and experienced Santal woman. She is called Dhai. In case of a difficult delivery, they ask the midwife of the nearest hospital to attend. After delivery the umbilical cord is severed by the Dhai with the help of a sharp edged arrow. At the same time an elderly pair (husband and wife) is selected to act as barber to do other jobs connected with the child birth, i.e., to crush turmeric, prepare leaf cups and plates, and to cut hair of the child. They are known as "Hoiyo Budi and Hoiyo Hadam". After cleaning the child and the mother, the Dhai, the oldwomen and men go to the pond with turmeric and oil to take bath and to be freed from "Chhut" or pollution. After that all return home. The Dhai sprays water mixed with rice flour in the house and on the body of the persons present. Then they are declared as free from birth pollution. All present take some quantity of Nima-rice and disperse. When umbilical cord is dried and fallen, it is taken and buried under the threshold in a ceremonial way. Thus, the birthday ceremony ends.

Both cremation and burial are practised by the Santals. After death, the body is taken on a *charpoi*, to the cremation ground. On the way people pay their last respect by offering water and coins. In the cremation ground generally the elder son gives soil first in the grave, if the body is buried. If it is burnt, he sets fire to the pyre. After cremation, "Asthi" is collected from the ashes and kept in a small pot covered and sealed with a plaster made of powdered rice and turmeric. The said pot is kept in a hole properly covered with earth preferably under a nearby tree. Then the funeral party take bath and return home. The next function is "Umul Aadar" or Chaya invitation of the deceased. Boiled rice and chicken curry are prepared and served to the elderly persons who formally accept

the food. Thereafter, others take the prepared food. A portion of food is also kept in a corner of the house in the name of the deceased for three days till "Telnaha" function is held. At this stage the family is made *Sudha* or free from pollution temporarily. The death rite of the deceased ends after Bhandan at home and *Asthi Bisarjan* in a holy place of a river.

The Santal social activities are controlled by the caste Panchayat comprised of Majhi (head of the caste Panchayat), Jaga Majhi (assistant to Majhi), Paranik (liasion of unmarried boys and girls), Godet (the Dakua or call man) and elders of the village. They settle all disputes except murder cases. The decision of the Majhi is honoured. The defaulters are fined according to the gravity of the case starting from one pitch of Handia to five with goat and rice for feast of the persons engaged in deciding the case. The post of representatives are inherited from generation to generation till the extinction of that family. The posts are honorary. They are entertained on the occasion of marriage, birth and death.

The Santals have no separate person except "Naik" who usually act as "Majhi" of the village. He performs socio-religious functions such as Baha, Maa Bonga, Got Bonga, Beja Tunj Bonga and other *pujas*.

The Santals believe in idol worship. Morrang Buru and Jahar Aaiya are the main God and Goddess of the Santals. They have also separate deities for each family. The name of the domestic deity is kept confidential and told to the next head of the family for worship. In case of illness and obstacle the headman of the family pray the domestic deity for speedy recovery and relief from evil spirits. After fulfilment of their desire they offer cock, hen, goat, pig and dove to the deities. Handia, the intoxicating liquid prepared from rice is generally offered to "Hapramka", the ancestor.

The Santals of Balashwar district observe Sakrat (Makar Sankranti), Baha, Eroj, Raja, Asadia, Chaita, Gamha Dasain, Saharai, Mag, Mag Mone and Karam festivals. They also attend Dola, Durgapuja, Ratha Jatra and other festivals organized by other castes.

The Santals have different dances and musics for different occasions, i.e., Chhatiar (birth), Bapla (marriage), Dasain (Durgapuja), Saharai (Kalipuja), Jatra (in common fairs), Mamone and Baha (Salai Puja). They stage Lagne, Luhuri, Jhikha and Danta dance for amusement in the village. They use Madal, Dhumsa, Charchuri, Ghanta, Dak, Banan, Trian, Murali, etc., as musical instruments during dance and music. Recently they have added harmonium to their musical instruments.

They perform group dances. Both male and female dance together in circle holding hands of one another except in Danta, Baha and Magmone. They sing songs with varieties of tunes and rhythms.

Magic and witchcraft are still prevalent among the Santals. The Santal Ojha (Tantrakar) occupies a very high position in the society as he is expected to exercise control over evil spirits and cure diseases by spiritual methods. Generally women practise witchcraft. In most cases they become victims of murder when suspected of practising witchcraft.

In Baleshwar, social and cultural differences among the converted and non-converted Christians are noticed. The converted Santal Christians ceased to worship Marang Buru, Jahar Asiya and domestic deities. They also refrain from taking Handia and following other social customs. They are more health conscious and disciplined than the non-converted Santals.

SOCIAL LIFE

(i) Customs and Practices

Due to mass consciousness through education, information and global contact considerable changes have taken place in observing many of the orthodox customs and practices. However, the traditional Hindu and Muslim customs relating to birth, marriage and death are given below.

Birth

The Hindu pregnant woman observed various taboos for safe delivery and protection from attack of evil spirits. She has to observe also a number of restrictions during pregnancy. During this period she is kept cheerful and is generally given types of foods he wants.

When labour pain starts, she is usually taken to a lying-in room called *anturdisala*. Torn shoes broomstick or branches of *Siju* trees are suspended in front of the lying-in room to ward off evil spirits. A midwife is called to attend her. After delivery the umbilical cord of the child is cut with the help of a sea-shell, blade or knife and the placenta is disposed of in a ditch made outside the house. On the night of the sixth day after birth, the *Sasthi puja* is held. A ceremony called *uthiary* is observed on the seventh day. On this day the newborn baby and the mother take first purificatory bath. She takes second purificatory bath on the 12th day and is allowed to change her room. The child is named on the 21st day. It is known as *ekoisa*. On this occasion Satyanarayan Puja is held amidst much rejoicing and feast among relatives and neighbours.

The next important rituals among the Hindus are *Mundan* (shaving of the head), ear-boring and *Bidyaramha* (initiation of learning). Besides the above ceremonies, the Brahmin and the Kshatriya children in their early adolescence observe *Upanayan* (the sacred thread ceremony).

Among the Muslims, just after the birth of a child, the eldest male member of the family present at home generally recites the *Azan* (sacred verses of God) near the ears of the new-born child. The mother observes pollution for a period of forty days. During this period she abstains from regular prayer. On the sixth or seventh, day the child's head is shaved. Next ritual is *aqiqa*. It is generally held after forty days. In this ceremony one he-goat is sacrificed in case of a female child and two he-goats in case of a male child. The meat is distributed among the relatives and the poor for the well-being of the child. The *Bismillaha* ceremony of the child is observed between the age of four and five. The priest recites verses from the *Koran* and the child repeats it. This marks the beginning of the educational career of the child. They circumcise (*Khatan*) their male children at the age of 7 or 8.

Marriage

Among the Hindus *Brahma*, *Daiva*, *Ariya*, *Prajapatya*, *Asura*, *Gandharva*, *Rakshas* and *Paishacha* types of marriages are known to have been prevalent since ancient times. Of those, only *Prajapatya* type of marriage is now in vogue. Generally marriage is settled after the examination of the horoscope of both the bridegroom and the bride by the astrologer. He predicts whether the stars of the couple are in harmony or not. If the horoscopes of the couple are found compatible then the marriage is arranged. On an auspicious day according to the *Oriya* almanac.

It is generally held at the bride's house. On the day of marriage the mother and other women of the family bless the groom. The Brahmin priest chants hymns blessing and sprinkles sundried rice and flowers on him. The marriage party starts in a procession with great eclat. The drummers and trumpeters lead the procession followed by the bridegroom seated in a palanquin. The well-to-do families arrange carts and cars for the party members, if the distance is long.

Marriage takes place on an auspicious *lagna* (time) in the bride's residence. Arrangements of light, music and fire works depend according to the availability of funds. Generally people try to make the procession as lively as possible. On reaching the bride's house the women folk from the bride's side welcome the groom amidst blowing of conches and *hul huli* and *bandapana*.

Then the bride and bridegroom in their bridal dress are taken to the *vedi* (marriage pulpit). The rites of the marriage ceremony are held one after another by the Brahmin priest. The principal rites of marriage ends after *kanyadan* and *panigrahana*. After that bride and bridegroom are made to play with seven cowries with the help of close female relations. On the *vedi* presents are made both in cash or kind to the bride and the bridegroom.

In the meantime, a feast is arranged where all the members of the groom's party and the invitees are entertained.

On the next day the groom's party return home with the bride. The bride begins to wail with rhymes before departure, addressing her mother, grandmother, aunt, uncle, father, brother and sisters in a pathetic tone reminiscing the fondness, love and affection with which she was brought up all along in the midst of her relations and family members under the benign protection of her parents and grand parents. This is customary or else the women folk would murmur that the girl was anxious to leave her father's house for her father-in-law's. This custom is dying out, but is still prevalent in some remote rural areas.

When the groom's party reaches the house of the groom, seven women welcome the couple by performing *bandapana*. The bride and the groom are not usually allowed to meet in seclusion until the *chauthi* (fourth day) ceremony is over. The *astamangala* (eighth day) celebration is the concluding ceremony of the wedding.

In Muslim society generally *meher* is decided in the presence of both the marriage parties. Then the bride's guardian with two other witnesses takes the consent of the bride and they declare her opinion. After that the *Khutba-nikah* is cited by the *kazi* and the marriage is performed. The marriage is recorded in a register maintained by the *kazi* and signed by the bride, bridegroom and witnesses.

Mortuary Customs

When death takes place in a Hindu family the relatives and castemen of the area rush to the house in mourning and try to console the bereaved members. They make arrangement for the removal of the death body to the cremation ground. A bier is prepared with six poles of bamboo, cut to size, in the shape of a ladder. The dead-body is conveyed to the bier by the surviving members of the family with three loud shouts of *haribol* amidst bewailings of the women-folk. The funeral procession is generally led by the eldest son. The pall-bearers follow him with shouts of *haribol* and *harinam satyahai* at intervals and others go with crowbar, spade, axes, earthen pitchers, dried feggots of *tulasi* plants, etc. Friends and sympathisers of other

castes also accompany the procession. On the way to cremation ground *Khai* and *Kaudi* are thrown by the *karta* or chief mourner. Now a days in lieu of *kaudi*, coins are used. The dead body is usually cremated on the bank of a river. The dead bodies of the new born, the children up to five or six years of age, lepers and persons who dies of snake-bite and Sannyasis or ascetics are usually buried. *Mukhagni* or lighting of the funeral pyre is performed by the eldest son of the deceased, and in his absence by the other son or the nearest male member of his *kutumba*. Certain restrictions are maintained by the members of the *kutumba* with regard to food. Oil, ghee, non-vegetarian diet are not taken during the pollution period of mourning which lasts for 11 days. The *Sudhikriya* is held on the 10th day. The shaving and nail paring of the members of the *kutumba* are done on this day. The *karta* performs *tarpan* and offers *pinda* to the deceased and the family priest utters hymns for the salvation of the deceased soul. On the 11th day non-vegetarian food mainly fish which were banned during the period of mourning are allowed to all concerned.

The Muslims recite verses from the Koran at the time of death. After death, the villagers and the near and dear ones are informed of the death. The body is washed with water and covered with a white cloth (Kaffan) and camphor is sprinkled. It is then placed in a bier (Tabut). The relatives and villagers of the deceased carry the dead body to the graveyard where the last prayer (Namaj-e-Janaja) is offered. Then they place the corpse into grave dug for the purpose with its head to the north and face to the west, i.e., towards "Kaba". The grave is then closed with earth and the Imam recites verses from the Koran and persons accompanying the dead body also pray for the departed soul. On the 4th, 10th and 20th day the members of the deceased family arrange group Koran reading, feeding the poor and prayer for the departed soul. The death pollution ends on the 40th day. On that day Koran is recited in groups and charitable food and alms are given to the poor for the salvation of the departed soul.

Inter caste relations

The traditional division of Hindus into castes, though basically still intact, has lost much of its social rigidity to modern outlook in human relationship and social status. The drive of Mahatma Gandhi against the social disabilities of the untouchables has broken the barriers between the high castes and the untouchables. As untouchability is now punishable under law, people of various castes do not hesitate to worship, sit and dine in a common place. The change of occupations, spread of education and appointment of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in

private and public sectors have shrunken the traditional differences between various castes. Intercaste marriages, though rare in the district, are now tolerated. Under these circumstances the traditional structure of the Hindu society based on caste is undergoing a sea change.

The tribals have retained their individual identity based on clans and dialects, but they have cordial relationship and co-operation among themselves. Sometimes inter-tribe marriages though not socially recognised are tolerated and made regular after observance of due ceremonies.

New religious leaders and movements

Followers of Shri Ramakrishna, Shri Sarada (for Vivekananda), Shri Aurobindo and Shri Maa, Sathyasai Baba, Swami Shivananda, Thakur Anukul Chandra, Thakur Nigamananda, Aviram Paramahansa and Mahima Gosain, the founder of the Mahima cult are found at different places in this district. They have formed their own organizations and are carrying on religious functions with the help of their followers.

(ii) Property and Inheritance

As regards inheritance and succession to property all the Hindus of the district except the Bengalis are governed by the Mitakshara School of Hindu law. The Bengalis are governed by the Dayabhag School of Hindu law. The Muslims are governed by the Mohammadan Law of Succession. The Tribals, however, are governed by their own customs and usages.

The joint family system is prevailing in the district. Of late the system is rapidly breaking up due to the new living conditions, pressure on purse and migration to urban areas in search of livelihood. In spite of this number of joint families still exist in the district and they continue to be so by circumstances. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 has allowed equal share in properties to daughters and the widow along with sons. But the daughters are not generally enforcing the right as they do not like to alienate the sympathy of their brothers in their parental home. As the parents are forced to give dowry (in spite of the legal prohibition) at the time of their daughters' marriage (otherwise they will not be able to get them married), they also do not like that their daughters should get shares from their property after their death.

Transfer of property through wills is sometimes considered as a sign of weakening of joint family ties. But it does not seem to be so in all cases. However, the number of wills registered in 16 Sub-Registrar offices of the district from 1969 to 1985 is 914. Details are given in the Appendix IV of this chapter.

(iii) Marriage and Morals

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 forbids polygamy. Monogamy prevails among most of the castes and tribes.

The Hindu marriage is regulated according to *gotra*. Generally the *gotra* of one's father is taken into account when a marriage is contemplated. But this kind of restriction is no longer followed strictly in recent times. Horoscope examination of the bride and the bridegroom, and the ceremony of *nirbandha* which were rigidly observed in the past are not followed rigidly under the changed circumstances. The practice of child marriage which was common in the former days has almost disappeared and the age of marriage has substantially increased in case of both the male and the female. Any marriage outside one's caste is considered as a gross violation of social norms. But these inter-caste marriage restrictions are gradually decreasing and inter-caste marriages are increasing among the educated persons. To get rid of heavy expenses and botherations people are gradually adopting registered marriage in the court. Deviations from the usual procedure is also seen in cases where a boy and a girl fall in love and decide to marry. If the concerned parents give consent, it is solemnised in the usual manner. Otherwise the couple consummate the marriage according to their own choice.

From time immemorial dowry system is in vogue in our society. In recent years to get a well educated and well-placed bridegroom the parents are offering more dowry either in cash or in kind. This practice causes great hardship to most economically backward parents. There are also instances of enlightened persons who refuse to accept dowry. To eradicate this social evil, the Dowry Prevention Act was passed by the Indian Parliament in 1961. Accordingly the Government of Orissa have also introduced the Dowry Prevention Act.

In order to prevent deaths arising out of the nasty dowry system and also the consequential suicides of women for the dowry problem including the torture and the harassment meted out to them, sections 498-A and 306 of the Indian Penal Code was introduced. To add to this, section 3 and 4 of the Dowry Prevention Act, 1961 read with the amendment of 1984 (made effective from 2nd October 1985) are also applicable at present.

Statistics relating to dowry issue in Baleshwar district is given below* :

Year	Dowry death		Anti-dowry	Charge-sheeted	Final report true	Pending Investigation	Total
	Suicide	Home-cide					
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1986	5	..	7	9	3	..	12
1987	6	..	6	1	..	11	12

Civil Marriage

The Government of India's Special Marriage Act was first passed in the year 1872. It was substituted by the Special Marriage Act, 1954 with certain modifications. This new Act was enforced on the first day of January, 1955 and the Government of Orissa framed rules to implement the Act in the same year. Under these rules civil marriages are registered by the Sub-Registrar. Of the 1766 civil marriage notices filed from 1969 to 1985 in Baleshwar district, only 629 civil marriages had been registered. Details are given in the Appendix V of this chapter.

Widow Remarriage

Widow remarriage is no longer disapproved in the society. It is mostly now confined to the educated mass. Among the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes widow remarriage is permissible by tradition.

Divorce

Marriage being considered a sacrament, some castes avoid divorce. But among certain castes divorce is easy. It can be brought about at the will of either party. According to the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, divorce is allowed on some specific grounds to be determined by the courts. In Baleshwar district, number of divorce cases filed in the court was 64 during 1971 to 1980 and 77 during 1981 to 1985**.

The place of women in society and their economic dependence

Women occupied high position in the Hindu society since the ancient times. In this connection Manu had said that Gods reside in those households where women are respected. The

*Deputy Inspector General of Police, HA & DD, Orissa, Cuttack,

**District Judge, Baleshwar.

husband who disregard his wife is punished by the God. Similarly, the wife was supposed to worship her husband as God and remain faithful to him. Women were able rulers and brave fighters of which the history of Orissa bears ample testimony. A galaxy of women ruled Orissa in the 8th to 10th centuries. The status of women, however, declined after the Muslim invasions of India when seclusion or *pardha* came into vogue as measure of safety and protection. The practice continued thereafter among different castes as a mark of social prestige. It was observed strictly in villages than in towns and more rigidly followed among the Muslims than among the Hindus. But things have changed with the spread of education and the former seclusion of women has almost disappeared.

After independence the desire for improvement in the level of living and soaring prices have created problems unknown in the past. Generally in most cases men are economically active, though in rural areas among the cultivating classes women have been giving a helping hand to their male partners in rearing cattle, looking after crops and assisting them in agricultural operations. It was only in towns that women are completely dependent and generally do not take part in any economic activity. Economic stress and worries of modern life have made it difficult for the people in urban areas to achieve certain standard of living. Nowadays educated women are coming out in increasing numbers to shoulder the responsibility of running the household by engaging themselves in economic pursuits.

Prostitution, drinking and gambling

In the darkness of the under world prostitution thrives mostly in urban centres like Baleshwar, Bhadrak and Manjuri Road. There is no organised brothel nor was there in the past. Women police, a recent addition to the force have booked a few cases under the suppression of Immoral Traffic in women & Girls Act (SITA), But that is not adequate, there is no reformatory homes for the rehabilitation and restoration of ill-fated women in this district. There is one Kanyashram at Soro which is meant for small girls to be educated. There is another Kanyashram at Baleshwar which is meant for destitutes.

Drinking has become a social evil. Educated youngsters are the foremost prey of this evil. Also people of poor class like daily labourers and rickshaw-pullers fell to this vice. The tribals accept it as their social custom.

Gambling is going on at a lesser scale and it has not been completely stopped. There are regular drives from the police side to prevent both illicit sale of liquor and gambling.

Number of cases registered under Suppression of Immoral Traffic in women and Girls Act and Gambling Act for the year 1980—85 are given below:*

Year	S. I. T. Act	Gambling Act
1980	2	11
1981	1	21
1982	..	5
1983	..	14
1984	..	11
1985	..	13

HOME LIFE

Type of Dwellings

In 1971 ** there were 407,320 houses in Baleeshwar district, of which 381,780 were in the rural areas and 25,540 in the urban areas. The distribution of houses and the uses to which they were put in the district are given below.

Type of Houses	Number
1. Houses vacant at the time of house-listing ..	12,465
2. Occupied houses used as—	
(i) Residence ..	279,425
(ii) Shop-cum-residence ..	2,570
(iii) Workshop-cum-residence including household industry	3,260
(iv) Hotels, Sarais, Dharmasalas, Tourist homes and Inspection houses	695
(v) Shops excluding eating houses ..	7,850
(vi) Business houses and offices ..	1,860
(vii) Factories, Workshops and Worksheds ..	4,495
(viii) Restaurants, Sweetmeat shops and eating places	1,465
(ix) Places of entertainment and community gathering (Panchayat Ghar) excluding places of worship	1,435
(x) Places of worship (e. g. Temple, Church, Mosque, Gurudwara, etc.)	8,235
(xi) Others ..	83,565
Total houses ..	407,320

*Superintendent of Police, Baleeshwar.

** Census of India, Orissa, Housing Report and Tables, 1971, p. 83.

It is seen from the foregoing statement that the majority of the houses are used as residence. Places of worship (e.g., temple, church, mosque, Gurudwara, etc.) houses constitute the second highest group and the lowest category includes hotels, Sarais, Dharmashalas, tourist homes and inspection bungalows and rest sheds.

According to the 1971 Census*, Baleshwar district had 4.4 per cent houses with walls made of grass, leaves, reeds or bamboo in rural areas and 5.7 per cent in urban areas. But the percentage of such materials for walls were 4.1 per cent in rural and 2.6 per cent in urban areas in 1961. This indicates a slight increase during the decade 1961—71. The reason why such poor quality materials like grass, leaves, reeds or bamboo find favour for construction of walls in the urban areas may be found in the large number of cheap temporary hutments fast coming up to accommodate the economically backward people who migrate to urban areas to earn their livelihood. Due to the increasing influx of such persons to the urban areas of Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Jaleshwar, Chandbali and Soro slums consisting of clusters of cheap improvised hutments have come up.

In the rural areas mud is the most common material for construction of walls. Baleshwar district has recorded 91.6 per cent houses with mud walls in rural areas. This is second highest in the state. The proportion of such houses in Mayurbhanj district is the highest (92.1 per cent). In the urban areas of Baleshwar the highest percentage (54.5 per cent) of houses are found with mud walls in the state. It is the only district in the state of Orissa to have more than 50 per cent of the houses in the urban areas having mud walls. When compared to the 1961 Census data with those of 1971 Census, it was found that in the rural areas of Baleshwar the proportion of houses with mud walls has recorded steady fall from 1951 to 1971. In urban areas the district has also shown the decrease in proportion from 79.8 per cent to 54.5 per cent.

In recent years, for better living people prefer burnt brick as wall material. In the rural areas 2.9 per cent and in urban areas 34.5 per cent of such walls are found. It is of interest that Baleshwar district has the lowest proportion of burnt brick wall houses in the state. Even so there has been a phenomenal growth of houses with burnt brick as wall material in this district compared to 1961 when the proportion was as low as 8.1 per cent in the urban areas. In rural sector, Baleshwar district also recorded the lowest (2.9 per cent) in the state. A few persons in the district have constructed houses with stones, G. I. sheets or other metal sheets as wall material.

*Census of India, Orissa, Housing Report and Tables, 1971, p. 29.

Generally grass, leaves, reeds, thatch, wood, mud, bamboo, tiles, corrugated iron, asbestos cement sheets and R. B. C./R. C. C. are used as materials for construction of roofs in the district. But the incidence of grass, leaves, reeds, thatch and bamboo as roof materials in the rural areas was 93.4 per cent in 1971. This is the second highest in the state. Phulabani (formerly Boudh-Khondmals) district occupied the highest (95.6 per cent) position in this respect. In the urban areas 59.7 per cent houses are found with thatched roofs. This proportion is also next to Phulabani (formerly Boudh-Khondmals) (66.3 per cent). Compared to 1961 figure, a continuous decrease in the proportion of thatched houses is noticed during the decade 1961—71. This is a clear indication that people prefer better roofing materials than grass, leaves and reeds. The use of tiles, slate or shingle as roof material is the lowest in the State. But it recorded an increase in 1971 over that of 1961 in the rural and urban areas. The proportion of houses with corrugated iron/zinc or other metal sheets as roof material is only 1.3 per cent in the rural and 8.5 per cent in the urban areas of the district in 1971. The 1961 Census has recorded 0.5 per cent and 4 per cent of such houses respectively in the district. Higher proportion of houses with asbestos cement sheets are noticed in the urban areas than in the rural areas of the district. In the urban areas the district has 7.4 per cent houses with asbestos cement sheet roof whereas the proportion is below one in the rural areas in 1971. Houses with asbestos cement sheet as roof material was 0.2 per cent in rural and 2.3 per cent in urban areas in Baleshwar according to the 1961 Census. Comparing the data of 1961 Census with that of 1971 Census an impressive increase in proportion is noticed in the matter.

Cement, concrete and iron rods are available throughout the district. People whose economic condition is good now prefer R. C. C. roof than other materials. In this district, 1971 Census has recorded 19.5 per cent houses with stone, concrete, R. B. C./R. C. C. as roof materials in urban areas. The percentage of houses with such materials was 9.4 in 1961. As for the rural areas, Baleshwar district has recorded 0.3 per cent in 1961 and 1.1 per cent in 1971, houses with R. C. C. or R. B. C. as roof material. In urban areas, the increase is impressive than the rural areas.

Since the cost of building construction materials are increasing day by day it has become impossible for the poor people to construct a house. Under this circumstances Government have decided to construct low-cost houses for the poorest of the poor belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded labourers in the rural areas. Keeping this in view "Indira Awas Yojana" has been formulated by the Government under the 20-point programme. This scheme is fully funded by the Central Government. It was

taken up in the year 1985-86. The total number of houses allotted to the Scheduled Tribes and other castes in the district is 523. The number of houses provided to Scheduled Tribes and other castes in Baleshwar district are given below*.

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of houses allotted to the persons in the year					
		1985-86	1986-87				
(1)	(2)	S. C. (3)	S. T. (4)	Total (5)	S. C. (6)	S. T. (7)	Total (8)
1	Bhograir	36	20	56	36	20	56
2	Jaleshwar	10	10	20	10	10	20
3	Basta	26	26	52	26	26	52
4	Baliapal	15	7	22	15	7	22
5	Knaira	18	3	21	18	3	21
6	Similia	14	14	28	14	14	28
7	Bahanagar	26	26	52	26	26	52
8	Soro	40	40	80	40	40	80
9	Bhadrak	128	128	256	128	128	256
10	Tihidi	18	18	36	18	18	36
11	Bant	99	99	198	99	99	198
12	Dhamnagar	25	25	50	25	25	50
13	Oupada	28	28	56	28	28	56
14	Nilagiri	28	28	56	28	28	56
15	Remuna	22	22	44	22	22	44
Total		429	94	523	429	94	523

Household utensils, furniture and house decoration

Most of the people live modestly. Their household articles comprises ordinary utensils, tin boxes and bamboo-made *pedis* (box), agricultural implements, earthen pots of different shapes and sizes and some bamboo-made articles like baskets.

The utensils used by the people are generally of bell-metal, brass, aluminium and stone. Big bowls of bell-metal are found in each household. The affluent ones have brass pitchers for fetching and storing water. Dishes, cups and tumblers made of the same substance are in common use. For cooking, earthen pots and pans of aluminium and iron are used by all the households. As stone utensil factories are found in Nilagiri region of the district, most of the villagers use stone dishes, cups and bowls. In many families use of stainless steel utensils are also found. It is gaining popularity more in urban areas than in rural areas of the district.

Bamboo-made baskets, winnowing fans, broom sticks, etc., are used by all. Articles of value are stored in *Sinduka*, trunk and bamboo-made *pedis*. In sophisticated families these items have become obsolete. They are now using steel almirahs and iron chests. *Dhenki*, the wooden huller is found more or less in every village. Use of such device has considerably decreased due to advent of rice hullers. *Sila* and *Chaki*, the grinding stones are common to all households. Modern devices of grinding are gradually replacing the traditional household appliances in many parts of the district.

Like other household articles *Batua* is also found in many houses. It is used to keep *pan*, *chuna*, *khaira*, *gundi*, and *guakati*. People carry it wherever they go and prepare *khilipan* instantly when they like to chew it. This fashion is still popular among the older generation mostly in rural areas.

Well-to-do families in the district use various types of furniture for a comfortable living. They possess chairs, tables, sofa sets, bench, stool, almirah, dressing table, bedsteads, wardrobe and other furniture made of wood, cane or steel according to their need, taste, status and capacity. Those who cannot afford remain content with wooden bedstead, chair, table, bench and stool of ordinary type. In the district most of the houses have no furniture but stringed charpoys. The frame of the charpoys are made of wood and the strings used is either of jute or Sabai grass.

All the 7 towns of the district, viz., Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Jaleshwar, Soro, Nilagiri, Chandbali and Basudebpur are electrified. Besides that 2660 villages (69.42 per cent) have been electrified till the

31st March 1986. The electricity consumers use television, radio, transistor, heater, table and ceiling fan. Non-electricity consumers use lamp, lantern and petromax. Those households who have no lanterns use kerosene lamps made of tin called 'Dibiri'. Bicycle is commonly used by the people. A few persons have mopeds, scooters, motor cycles and motor cars.

In addition to household equipment, the people of Baleshwar decorate their dwelling houses on festive and ceremonial occasions. They smear their floors and walls with cow-dung and coloured earth or pastes. On all Thursdays, especially during the month of Margasira (November-December) Hindus decorate their floors, walls and door steps by drawing floral, geometrical, anthropomorphical and zoomorphical designs with the help of *chita* or *alpana* in honour of the goddess Lakshmi. The doors and windows of the houses are often artistically carved with different designs to arrest the eyes of the visitors. Proficiency in *alpana* or *chita* was considered to be a prerequisite of the Hindu housewife and the tradition still persists in many parts of the district. Apart from these, houses of well-to-do families are also decorated with door and window screens, door mats and flower pots. Some of the house walls are also decorated with photographs and calendars bearing pictures of gods and goddesses, eminent national leaders, scenery and toys.

Dress

Generally, men wear *dhoti*, *gamuchha* and *lungi*. They also use shirt, vest, pant, trouser, bush shirt and coat. Women put on *sari*. Use of blouse and *saya* has also become common except by the poorest of the poor ladies. The widows do not use bordered saris. Girls put on frocks, jumpers and middy blouses.

During winter, the common men use cotton jerseys, coarse cotton Chaddars or wrappers. The women, at home, do not generally use any extra garment for the winter. Children are provided with jackets, cardigans and cheap quality dress materials. The affluent ones use woolen wrappers.

During summer and the rainy season most of the people use umbrellas. In rural areas the common people use *pakhias* made of palmyra-palm leaves. It is also used by members of both the sex while working in the field.

Cheap *chappals* are used by men when they move out. Women rarely use any footwear. The members of the affluent families use good quality chappals, socks and shoes.

Ornaments

The people of Baleshwar wear a variety of ornaments. In the past the principal ornaments used by the women in the head were *tiana* and *sinthi* of gold or silver. Young women use hair pins with floral embroideries which are generally made of silver and sometimes of nickel also. They are called *matha phulakanta* and *matha panakanta*. For the neck they use *Champakadi*, *Kanthe*, *Jhinjira* and necklaces made of gold or silver. For the arms they use armlets called *taita* and for the wrists they use bangles and bracelets of silver or gold called *Dala*, *chudi*, *sankha*, *bataphala*, *modabala*, *paincha* and *katun*. They also use bangles made of glass or plastic of different colours and designs. For the ears and nose, gold ornaments are used. The nose ornaments are called *dandi*, *nakaphula*, *phuli* and *nuduika*. Out of these, the *dandi* which is set with stones is the most common ornament. Ear-tops and ear-rings of various designs for the ears are used. *Phasia noli* and *Kanachampa* are common ear ornaments for the women. Silver and gold rings are worn in the fingers. *Chandahara* a stout chain of silver is used round the waist. Anklets of silver called *bankia* are used on the ankles. Rings of silver are also used in the toes by the women. All these ornaments are not for daily use. It is only on festive occasions and ceremonies that the women put on most of their ornaments.

The men ordinarily do not use ornaments but some wear rings of gold, silver or nickel in their fingers. According to the financial condition of the people, the use of ornaments varies from cheap materials to gold ornaments.

Personal decoration

There is no speciality in the hair style of women. The grown up and middle aged women generally tie their hair into knots behind after combing with combs made of wood, horn or plastic. The younger ones particularly of the higher caste Hindu families love to have plaits dangling on their back. Men generally trim their hairs short.

Some women have tattoo marks on their limbs. Generally geometrical figures on the elbows and dot marks on the forehead of women irrespective of caste are noticed. Such marks are also seen on the palm and feet. Some men have their own names or the names of gods tattooed on their forearms. It is believed by women that the tattoo marks save them from being punished by the Yama, the god of Death. This fashion is no more in vogue.

Food

The food habits of the people are simple. Those staying in rural areas have not changed much by the passage of time. Their main food still consists of rice, Dal and vegetable curry. For breakfast and even for lunch the rural folk mainly women and children

take watered rice called *pakhal*. The food habits of the urban people have, however, changed appreciably in recent times. They generally take rice, Roti or bread, Dal and vegetables with some Ghee (clarified butter). The well-to-dos in towns add such ancillary items as salad, chutney, pickle and some extra vegetables. The evening meals usually consists of Roti and vegetable curry. Some people repeat *bhat* and dal also at night. Fish, meat, egg, dried fish, lobster and crab are taken when available. On the occasion of feasts or festivals the meal is supplemented by sweetmeats and savouries. Each community has a special culinary item to suit the occasion. The festive dishes vary according to one's taste and purse. Most people have two meals a day, one at noon and the other in the night. In between principal meals people usually eat *pitha* (rice cakes), *chuda* (flattened rice), *muri* (puffed rice) and *khai* (pop rice) as tiffin. Popular Indian recipes are available in restaurants, both big and small throughout the district. *Palua ladu* of Bhadrak and *Gaja* of Baleshwar are well-known as special sweetmeats in the state. Drinking tea is very common among the people. It was rarely used as drink fifty years ago. Nowadays it has become a universal drink. In summer the people of Baleshwar quench their thirst with cool drinks, Sherbats and aerated waters. Smoking and chewing of betel leaves are common in the district. Apart from that people relish smoking and chewing tobacco. Some are also addicted to *ganja* and *bhanga*.

Mustard oil and Ghee were used as the medium of cooking since long. Nowadays groundnut oil, vanaspati and the recently introduced imported palm oil are being used widely for preparation of cakes and other delicacies. Ghee is used very sparingly and mostly by the well-to-do to prepare delicacies for offering to the deities during festivals. Pure Ghee has become not only costly but also a rarity.

Firewood from forests is used as the principal fuel in the district. Dried leaves are collected and stored specially for boiling paddy. Cow-dung is also made into balls or flattened cakes and dried in the sun to be used as fuel. Besides kerosene stoves and electric heaters, cooking gas is gradually becoming popular in urban areas. Bio-gas plants are gradually increasing in number in the district, The figures are given below:*

Period	Number of Bio-gas plants installed
1984-85	61
1985-86	273
1986-87	251

*Project Officer, District Rural Development Agency, Baleshwar.

COMMUNAL LIFE

Pilgrim centre

The important pilgrim centres of the district are given below :

Sl. No.	Name of the pilgrim centres	Police-station	Famous temple/tomb	Religion
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Aradi	Chandbali	Siva temple (Akhandalmani)	Hindu
2	Chandaneswar (Huguli village)	Bhograi	Siva temple	Hindu
3	Panchalingeswar	Nilagiri	Siva temple	Hindu
4	Remuna	Remuna	(a) Khirachora Gopinath temple (b) Tomb of Gulab Shah Shahid	Hindu Muslim

Salient features about these places are given in the Chapter XIX (Places of Interest).

Communal Dance

Chhau Nancha, Danda Nacha, Chadhei Chadheiani Nacha and Kandhei Nacha are popular in the district. Description of some dances are given below.

Chhau dance

Patronised by the ex-rulers Chhau dance was prevalent in Nilagiri, Bonai, Kendujhar and Mayurbhanj area in the state of Orissa. At Nilagiri Chhau dance takes place at the subdivisional headquarters once a year during the month of April. Mainly male members participate in this dance. Different types of dresses are used by the artists for performing this dance. Most of the dances are based on the mythological themes such as Radha-Krishna Milan, Tandaba Nrutya of Siva, war dance, etc. Background songs are provided during the performances of the dance. Funds are being sanctioned by the Orissa State Government from time to time for the upliftment of the dance. The Swarnachuda Chhau Nrutya Anusthan, Nilagiri, is receiving an annual grant of

Rs.500/- from the Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi. This organisation is in a moribund condition. It is seldom capable to show its performances even once a year.

Danda Nacha

Danda Nacha (dance) is a ritual dance. The participants of the dance are the devotees of Hara-parvati. They perform the dance in the month of Chaitra (March-April) and Vaishakha (April-May). Danda begins on an auspicious day before the Chaitra Sankranti or Mahavishuva Sankranti with traditional worship and fasting. This dance consists of a series of different dances which are performed one after another by the male members generally belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The music of the Danda Nacha varies for different dances. The songs are of different tunes for different characters. The songs are mainly devotional and are based on the stories from the epics.

Fairs and Festivals

Fairs and festivals are important not only because of the religious significance and holiness attached to their observance but also because of the welcome change they bring into the otherwise dull and drab routine of every day life. These are occasions of community mirth and delight of meeting relative and friends. The festivals usually signify a much needed rest from routine work and every one appears at his best in resplendent cloths. Apart from the traditional worship of the gods and deities of the occasion and remembrance of ancestors, preparations and partaking of good food, singing and dancing welcoming friends and relatives are the highlights of each festival. Some religious functions like Janmastami and Durga Puja are community festivals while others like "Prathamastami" are confined to family celebrations as per Oriya almanac.

Chandan Jatra

The Chandan Jatra is observed in many villages under Baleshwar, Khair, Soro, Bhograi, Baliapal, Basudebpur and Nilagiri police-stations. It starts from Akshya Trutiya and continues for 21 days. Due to pressure on purse, it is observed for 4 or 5 days at many places.

Baruni Jatra

Baruni is observed on the 13th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Chaitra (March-April). On this day many people take holy dip in the Pandab Ghat of Baleshwar. They pay oblation to their ancestors and visit nearby temples to offer

prayer. This festival is also held at Govindapur (Baleshwar P. S.), Bedpur (Similia P. S.), Anantapur (Soro P. S.), Dogra (Baliapal P. S.), Chaumukhi (Baliapal P. S.), Barunei (Tihiri P. S.) and Chatrapada (Tihiri P. S.). If Baruni Snana falls on Saturday and in Satavisa Nakshetra then it is called Mahabaruni Joga.

Chadak Jatra

The Chadak Jatra is celebrated in Chandaneswar temple on the last day in the month of Chaitra (March-April). It is situated in the village Huguli under Bhograi police-station. About 10,000 people congregate celebrate the festival. Since the temple is situated near the border of Orissa and West Bengal many people from the neighbouring state also attend the festival. Number of temporary stalls are generally opened on the occasion. Health, Electricity, Transport and Public Relations department provide facilities to the people. This festival is also observed in many places under Baliapal, Raibania and Bhandaripokhari police-stations of the district.

Raja Sankranti

Raja is an important festival connected with agriculture. It is observed by people of all walks of life in general and cultivators in particular. It is observed for three consecutive days in the month of Asadha (June-July). The last day of the month of Jyaistha is called Pahili Raja. The first day of Asadha is known as Raja Sankranti. The second day and third day of Asadha are known as Bhuindahan and Basumati Puja respectively.

For the occasion all the houses are cleaned and the well-to-do ones wear new clothes. The women-folk eschew all manual labour for these days. Big rice cakes prepared with a mixture of fine powdered rice, cocoanuts and molasses are enjoyed during the festival. The children dressed in colourful garbs, arrange rope swing in the home or in the open place under mango or banyan trees and enjoy swinging in great revelry and merriment. Even the elderly people join the young ones in amusement and play dice. The young people play 'Bagudi' or 'ha-do-do' on stakes accompanied by beating of Nagara. Ploughing is not done for these three days, the popular belief being that the Mother Earth is in menstruation.

Ratha Jatra

The Ratha Jatra or the Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held on the second day of the bright fortnight in the month of Asadha (June-July) at Nilagiri, Baleshwar, Bhadrak and other places of the district. The three deities - Jagannath, Balabhadra and

Subhadra - are brought from the main temple and placed in the wooden chariot. After due ceremony, the chariot is drawn with a coir rope by hundreds of devotees to the Shri Gundicha Mandira or Mausima Mandira. The deities remain in that temple for seven days being worshipped. At Nilagiri they assume Mashya, Kashyapa, Baraha, Nrushingha, Bamana, Rama, Balarama, Buddha, Parsuram and Kaliki Abatar. Large number of devotees come for Darshan on these days to the Shri Gundicha Mandira. Businessmen take full advantage of this Jatra and open temporary stalls. Brass and bell-metal utensils, furniture, agricultural implements, bamboo products, various kinds of handicrafts, earthen and stone wares, varieties of foods and stationery articles are generally sold. Circus, opera party and merry-go-round provide entertainment to the persons assembled there.

The return car festival or Bahuda Jatra is performed on Asadha Sukla Dasami, i.e., the tenth day of the bright fortnight. At Nilagiri, the return of the deities from Shri Gundicha Mandira to the main temple generally take two days on the way. This festival is being observed in this subdivision with much pomp and show since the Durbar period.

Gamha Purnima

In the month of Shraban (July-August) Gamha Purnima is celebrated. People worship Lord Balabhadra. Cattle are also worshipped on this day. The other significance of the day is Rakhi-Bandhan. As a bond of protection, sisters tie a coloured silken thread as a sign of love and a plea for eternal protection. It is also believed that the thread will protect the wearer from all evils. The brothers accept the bond and return the honour with a gift. Sweetmeats, cakes and other delicacies are prepared in every house on the occasion.

Jhulan Jatra

The Jhulan Jatra or the swing festival of the deities Radha-Krishna is held from the 10th of the bright fortnight in the month of Shraban (July-August) to the full-moon day. It is observed at many temple and Mathas of the district of which mention may be made of the Khirachora Gopinath temple at Remuna.

Janmastami

Janmastami is observed on the 8th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Shraban (July-August). It is the birthday of Lord Shri Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu. On this occasion all the Vishnu temples are decorated with light and flower.

A large number of devotees go to the temples for worship. The next day is celebrated as Nanda Ustab. Joyous scenes from Lord Krishna's life are re-enacted and sweets are distributed among the people.

Ganesh Chaturthi

On the fourth day in the month of Bhadrab (August-September) the birth of Ganesh or Ganapati is celebrated. This elephant-headed god of wisdom and prosperity is a popular deity of the Hindus. Known by many names, he is widely worshipped as Vighneshwar, the remover of obstacles. For this he is propitiated at the start of any work or ceremony. His birthday, therefore, is celebrated all over the district.

On Ganesh Chaturthi, the clay idol of the god is brought into the house and installed. It is kept for one day or more according to the will of the worshipper. Whatever may be the period, the idol is worshipped with special prayers in the morning and evening until it is ceremoniously immersed in a river or tank or canal.

Educational institutions in Baleshwar district celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi with great enthusiasm. It is considered to be the most auspicious day of the year, when children are taken to school for the first time to begin their studies.

Biswakarma Puja

People of the district worship Biswakarma, the Maker of the Universe in the month of Bhadrab (August-September). On this day they worship their vocational implements and stop work in the workshop. This worship is no longer confined to the Badhei, Kamar and Tanti castes nowadays due to industrialisation.

Karama Parba

The tribals of the district observe Karama Parba on the 11th day of the full-moon of Bhadrab (September-October). Two branches of Karama tree are brought by three maidens who pitch them in an open space. Handia is offered to the deities near these branches. Children and women dance around the branches to the rhythmic beating of drums. Feast, drinking of Handia and community dancing occupy the greater part of the day and night.

Durga Puja

Durga puja is one of the most popular festivals of the district. It is celebrated in the bright fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October) This colourful festival begins from Saptami (7th day) and ends on Dasami (10th day).

It was originally celebrated by the rich families of the district. Due to pressure on purse, gradually the practice of community worship of Durga as it prevails today became popular. Clay images of goddess Durga are worshipped at many places in the district with great pomp and splendour of which mention may be made of the celebrations held at Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Nilagiri, Soro, Jaleshwar and Chandbali. The 10th day of the festival is called *Dasahara*. On this day the images are taken out in procession for immersion in tanks or rivers. In some other places the images are immersed on the 11th day. Durga Puja is also celebrated at many *sakta* shrines in the district. Animals were sacrificed to please the deity.

Kumar Purnima

After Durga Puja comes Kumar Purnima. It is held on the full-moon day in the month of Aswina. On this day the unmarried girls wear new clothes. They worship the rising sun in the morning. They also worship the rising moon in the evening in front of the *tulasi chaura*. Bhoga offered to the full-moon is called *chanda*. Unmarried girls establish friendship by offering *chanda* to each other and call each other by that name. The girls sing song typical to the occasion and play Puchi which is a kind of frolicking game. The children enjoy the whole night by organising cultural programmes.

Kali Puja and Deepavali

Clay images of goddess Kali are set up and worshipped at Bhadrak, Baleshwar, Tihidi, Chandbali, Soro, Nilagiri and other places in the district and in the famous Bhadrakali temple near Bhadrak. It is observed on the 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Kartika (October-November).

The new-moon day of Kartika is known as Deepavali Amabasya or Paya Amabasya. On this day the Hindus in remembrance of their ancestors perform Sradha and bid farewell to them with lighted *kaunria* sticks in the night. Every home is decorated with rows of earthen lamps and the youth and the aged alike enjoy the evening with crackers and fireworks.

Kartika Purnima

This is observed on the full-moon day in the month of Kartika (October-November). Devotees old and young bathe in the rivers and tanks long before the dawn and then proceed to the temple. The devotees take *habishanna* once in the afternoon and touch no food after sun set. Some observe fasting on all

the Mondays of the month and some do it for five days and yet many others fast on the full-moon day only. On the last day tiny boats made of pith or paper are floated in the tanks, canals and rivers by the people. It is said that the day is reminiscent of the maritime trade and prosperity of the ancient Kalinga empire.

Prathamastami

After Kartika Purnima comes Prathamastami on the month of Margasira (November-December). This is the day for the eldest issue in each family who is provided with new dress mainly from the maternal uncles' family. Cakes and delicacies are prepared in each family in honour of the eldest. The festival is observed by people of all castes.

Makar Sankranti

The first day of Magha (January-February) is known as Makar Sankranti. Many elderly persons take their bath before dawn and on returning home make offerings of sweets and flowers to the Sun God. Cakes and delicacies are prepared in every home. A kind of sweet is specially prepared for the occasion called *tilou*. Powdered rice, treacle and a few grains of sesamum seeds are the components of this cake. This festival is observed both by the caste Hindus and Adivasis. The Adivasis celebrate it for one week whereas the caste Hindus observe it for one day only.

Muni Mela

Muni Mela or Jatra is held on Makar Sankranti at many places of which mention may be made of the celebrations held at Sahupara and Gudu in Baleshwar P. S., Jirita and Abhana in Soro P. S., Bedeipur in Basudebbpur P. S., Kodagamblin in Bhadrak P. S., Khardigmukhura in Remuna P. S. and Rama-krushnapur in Similia P. S.

Saraswati Puja

Saraswati Puja is celebrated throughout the district on the Magha Suka Panchami with usual gaiety and enthusiasm. The people decorate the clay image of Saraswati, the Goddess of learning with flowers and offer sweets and fruits. Children wear new dress on the occasion. In many homes children are initiated to the alphabet.

Sivaratri

Sivaratri is celebrated in all the temples of Lord Siva on the 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Phalguna (February-March). The devotees remain on fasting for the whole day and night and break their fast the next morning. Both men and women observe this festival. Number of devotees assemble on the festive day in the Siva temple and offer their Pujas with the help of the Brahmin priest. From dusk till dawn earthen lamps with cotton wicks immersed in Ghee remain burning continuously for the whole night. The devotees sit in lines watching over their lamps under improvised sheds of trees and the illumination presents a beautiful spectacle. Towards the dawn a lamp called "Maha Dipa" is taken to the top of the temple. The devotees watch this ceremony with keen interest and break their fast after it is over.

The festival is observed with great pomp and splendour at the Akhandalmani temple in Aradi under Chandbali P. S., Chandaneswar temple at Huguli under Bhograi P. S., Anijo Mahadev temple at Anijo under Bant P. S., Nangaleswar under Singla P. S., Ayodhya and Panchalingeswar in Shyamasundarpur Grama Panchayat under Nilagiri P. S. and Jhadeswar temple at Nayabazar in Balleshwar town.

On the occasion of Sivaratri temporary stalls are opened in and outside the temple premises. The villagers specially the womenfolk get an opportunity to select and purchase their requisites. Children enjoy sweetmeats from the stalls. Jatras and musical entertainments keep the visitors merry all through the night.

Salui Puja

Salui Puja or Baha is observed on Dola Purnima day (February-March) by the tribals of the district. The aim of this festival is to celebrate the advent of spring when *sal*, *palas* and *mohua* flowers blossom.

In the morning the villagers gather near a *sal* tree laden with blossoms and offer plantains, milk, honey and flowers to the Bongas (Supreme Being). Some youngmen then cut small branches containing the Blossoms which are taken home and fixed on the thresholds. Crescent moons are pointed at the entrance door with vermilion and oil.

After this the water festival follows. Coloured water is thrown on all men and women, young or old which resembles very much the Holi festival. All those participating in the festival take their bath before the evening. They all drink Handia and spend the moonlit night in dancing and singing.

Dola Jatra

The last festival of the Hindu almanac is Dola Purnima. It is celebrated on the full-moon day of the month of Phalguna (February-March). This festival is enjoyed for five days beginning with Phagu Dasami (10th phase of the moon) and concluding on the full-moon day. On this occasion the images of Radha and Krishna are brought from the temple altar and placed in a decorated Biman and carried in procession from house to house where they get Bhoga (offerings). All the communities join in the festival. Coloured powder (Abira) and coloured water are freely used all these days. In some places people observe Panchu Dola and Dasa Dola from the next day of Phagu Purnima or Dola Purnima. Images of Radha and Krishna are also brought from different villages to the Melan Padia (a meadow for meeting) where all enjoy in merriments. Sweet stalls and varieties of shops sit in this field. The whole area is agog with excitement.

This is also the main festival of the people belonging to Gauda caste. They worship the cow and play Naudi (a play with sticks) by singing songs relating to Radha and Krishna.

This festival is celebrated with pomp, grandeur and pageantry at Padampur in Baleshwar P. S., Ara, Maitapur and Khirkona in Similia P. S., Patirajpur, Golia in Khaira P. S., Abhana and Barikpur in Soro P. S., Mathani and Pinchabania in Basta P. S., Dakhinbar in Bhandaripokhari P. S., Kothar and Bayangdihi in Dhamnagar P. S., Kalimegha in Tihidi P. S., Motto in Chandbali P. S., Singla in Singla P. S., Brahmangan in Basudebpur P. S., Hatasahi in Nilagiri P. S., and Matiali in Berhampur P. S.

Christian Festivals

The Christians of the district observe New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Saturday, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with great pomp and show.

Muslim Festivals

The Muslim inhabitants celebrate Id-UI-Fitre, Id-UI-Zuha, Shab-E-Barat, Shab-E-Quadar, Juma-Tul-Wida, Muharram, Shab-E-Maraj, Milad-Un-Nabi and Ramzan like their fellow brethren in other parts of the state. Of these, the very important festivals celebrated by Muslims are Id-UI-Fitre, Id-UI-Zuha and Muharram.

Id-UI-Fitre comes with the new-moon and marks the end of Ramzan, the 9th month of the Muslim year. Muslims keep a fast every day during this month and on the completion of the period, which is usually decided by the appearance of the new-moon, Id-UI-Fitre is celebrated. On the occasion, prayers are offered in mosques and the Idgahs. People greet each other warmly. Hindus and Muslims join in the celebration of this great festival.

Id-UI-Zuha commemorates the ordeal of Hazrat Ibrahim, who was put to a severe test once by God. When he was asked to sacrifice what was dearest to him, he decided to sacrifice the life of his son. When he was on the point of applying the sword to his son's neck, it was revealed to him by the God that this was meant only to test his faith. Instead of it, he was asked to sacrifice only a ram. Id-UI-Zuha is celebrated on the 10th day of Zilhijjat, when the Haj festival at Mecca are rounded off by the sacrifice of goats and camels.

The observance of Muharram commemorates the tragic death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson. The first days of Muharram, which is the first month of the Muslim year, are dedicated to the mourning and martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain, the grandson of prophet Muhammad.

Recreation

Leisure and recreation are essential for life. After hardwork, people usually assemble in the temple, church, mosque and Gurudwara to offer prayer for refreshment of mind. Sometimes they also meet at places to listen to the recitals from Ramayan, Mahabharata, Bhagabat Purana, Gita, Koran, Bible and Granth Sahib. Some people get pleasure by singing classical, modern and devotional songs with the help of musical instruments. Occasionally, acrobatic feats, monkey dance, bear dance, snake-charming and magic performed by professional groups provide entertainment to the people. In some places amateur dramatic clubs

stage dramas. The theatre parties display folk-dances and operas. Pala and Daskathia also provide recreation to most of the people in this district. Film is a common source of entertainment. There are 19 film houses in the district. These are located at Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Soro, Jaleshwar, Chandbali, Deulahat, Chandaneswar, Madhabanagar, Remuna, Asurali, Basudebpur, Bhograi, Sugo, Basta, Karanda and Nangaleshwar. Besides these, the social and religious functions round the year keep engaged the people in gay and mirth.

Libraries, reading rooms, television and radio sets provide more recreational facility to the people. Sometimes people of all walks of life assemble in public places to discuss about the regional, national and international affairs and exchange their views.

Fishing is a favourite pastime. Cock-fighting is popular among the tribal people. Although poaching in the forests is prohibited under law, some people at times go to the hills in Nilagiri area with their guns, bows and arrows and bag some game birds. Schools, colleges and athletic clubs in the district offer opportunities to the students for out-door games. Poor as the majority of the people are, they can spare very little time for recreation. Yet indulgence in in-door games like playing cards, dice and ludu is not rare. Sixty-five recreational clubs and associations are functioning in the district, most of which organise various cultural programmes and athletic meets to promote competitive spirits among the boys and girls.

Hotels and restaurants are also places for social gathering and amusements. There are a few good hotels and restaurants in Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Chandbali, Chandipur and Nilagiri. Besides, people also find pleasure in visiting picnic spots, parks and garden. In the district Dhamara, Chandbali, Kuldiha, Panchalingeswar, Remuna, Aradi, Ayodhya, Abhana, Chandaneswar, Kupari, Raibania, Talasari and Chandipur picnic spots attract a large number of persons from all walks of life.

APPENDIX I

**Population of the Scheduled Castes of Baleshwar District
(According to 1971 Census)***

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheduled Castes	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Adi Andhra ..	5	5	10
2	Amanat or Amat ..	680	550	1,230
3	Bagheti or Baghuti ..	893	927	1,820
4	Bari ..	58	55	113
5	Bariki ..	1,343	1,341	2,684
6	Basor or Burud ..	13	12	25
7	Bauri ..	602	592	1,194
8	Bedia or Bejia ..	..	6	6
9	Bhata ..	56	45	101
10	Bhoi ..	17	20	37
11	Chamar, Mochi. Muchi or Satnami	6,566	6,702	13,268
12	Chandala ..	2	2	4
13	Dandasi ..	3	3	6
14	Dewar ..	44	46	90
15	Dhanwar ...	1	..	1
16	Dhoba or Dhobi ..	20,008	19,875	39,883
17	Dom, Dombo or Duria Dom ..	2,644	2,653	5,297
18	Ghasi or Ghasia ..	88	88	176
19	Ghusuria ...	1,237	994	2,231
20	Godra ..	71	48	119
21	Gokha ..	27,720	26,618	54,338
22	Haddi, Hadi or Hari ..	4,911	4,722	9,633
23	Jaggali ..	162	150	312
24	Kandra or Kandara ..	27,288	26,362	53,650
25	Karua ..	253	248	501
26	Kela ..	1,158	1,425	2,583
27	Kodalo or Khodalo ..	4,567	3,788	8,355

*Census of India, Orissa, Part-II-C (i) 1971, pp. 194—196.

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheduled Castes	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
28	Kummari ..	151	139	290
29	Kurunga ..	851	819	1,670
30	Laheri ..	36	59	95
31	Madari ..	16	15	31
32	Madiga ..	13	14	27
33	Mahuria ..	871	993	1,864
34	Mala, Jhala, Malo or Zala ..	8	—	8
35	Mehra or Mahar ..	35	32	67
36	Mehtar or Bhangi ..	607	621	1,228
37	Musahar ..	1	—	1
38	Nagarchi ..	1	—	1
39	Namasudra ..	2,953	2,926	5,879
40	Pan or Pano ..	46,946	45,086	92,832
41	Pantanti ..	1,475	1,407	2,882
42	Pap ..	—	1	1
43	Patial Patikar, Patratanti or Patua	1,330	1,189	2,519
44	Rajna ..	2	7	9
45	Relli ..	20	23	43
46	Sabakhia ..	166	144	310
47	Sanei ..	—	1	1
48	Sinduria ..	1	—	1
49	Siyal ..	383	276	659
50	Tamadia ..	262	211	473
51	Tiar or Tior ..	150	130	280
52	Turi ..	5	—	5
53	Ujia ..	6,062	6,081	12,143
54	Valamiki or Valmiki ..	52	69	121
	Unspecified ..	9,296	8,399	17,695

APPENDIX II

**Population of the Scheduled Tribes of Baleshwar District
(According to 1971 Census).***

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribes	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Bagata ..	27	39	66
2	Bathudi ..	4,917	5,049	9,966
3	Bhuiya or Bhuyan ..	668	733	1,401
4	Bhumij ..	13,992	13,801	27,793
5	Bhunjia ..	5	8	13
6	Binjhia or Binjhoa ...	6	10	16
7	Dal ..	68	111	179
8	Dharua ..	356	299	655
9	Gond, Gondo ..	49	104	198
10	Ho ..	113	94	207
11	Juang ..	17	6	23
12	Kandha Gauda ..	132	126	258
13	Kawar ..	..	4	4
14	Kharia or Kharian ..	526	617	1,143
15	Kharwar ..	22	21	43
16	Khond,, Kond or Kandha including Nanguli Kandha and Sitha Kandha	47	39	86
17	Kol ..	19	19	38
18	Kolah-kol-Loharas ..	..	4	4
19	Kolha ..	10,787	9,030	19,817

* Census of India, Orissa, Part-II-C (i) 1971, pp. 266-268.

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribes	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
20	Kora	150	149	299
21	Korua	80	52	132
22	Kotia	2	..	2
23	Lodha	11	11	22
24	Madia	13	17	30
25	Mahali	189	119	308
26	Mankirdia	17	24	41
27	Matya	184	138	322
28	Mirdha	10	2	12
29	Munda, Munda Lohara or Munda Mahalis	1,776	1,709	3,485
30	Mundari	412	495	907
31	Oraon	597	683	1,280
32	Parenga	..	1	1
33	Paroja	3	..	3
34	Pentia	5	23	28
35	Rajuar	19	24	43
36	Santal	22,855	24,066	46,921
37	Saora, Savar, Saura or Sahara	421	602	1,023
38	Shabar or Lodha	1,540	1,490	3,030
39	Sounti	705	599	1,304
40	Tharua	35	27	62
	Unspecified	4,444	3,583	8,027
	Total	65,264	63,928	129,192

APPENDIX III

Statistics of cases of atrocities on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and cases under Public Civil Rights Act.*

Year	Scheduled Castes						
	Reported	Charge sheeted	Final Report	Pending Investigation	Convicted	Acquitted	Pending trial
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1985	5	4	1	..	1	..	3
1986	4	4	..	..	..	..	4
1987 (up to May).	1	1	..	..	..	..	1

Year	Scheduled Tribes						
	Reported	Charge sheeted	Final Report	Pending Investigation	Convicted	Acquitted	Pending trial
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
1985	1	1	..	..	..	..	1
1986	1	1	..	..	..	..	1
1987 (up to May).	2	2	..	..	..	..	2

Year	Public Civil Rights Act						
	Reported	Charge sheeted	Final Report	Pending Investigation	Convicted	Acquitted	Pending trial
(1)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)
1985	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1986	2	2	..	..	..	..	2
1987 (up to May).	1	1	..	..	..	..	1

* Deputy Inspector-General of Police HA & DD, Orissa, Cuttack.

APPENDIX IV

Number of Wills Registered in the district *

Year (1)	No. of wills registered (2)
1969	54
1970	41
1971	34
1972	44
1973	53
1974	49
1975	42
1976	41
1977	56
1978	57
1979	56
1980	67
1981	71
1982	83
1983	84
1984	104
1985	78
Total	914

*District Registrar, Baleshwar-

APPENDIX V

**Number of Civil Marriages filed and registered
under Special Marriage Act, 1954. ***

Year	No. of marriage notices filed	No. of marriages registered
(1)	(2)	(3)
1969	50	16
1970	34	10
1971	44	13
1972	45	22
1973	52	13
1974	72	29
1975	70	14
1976	91	39
1977	90	30
1978	97	32
1979	144	44
1980	144	61
1981	151	49
1982	131	42
1983	164	46
1984	187	84
1985	200	85
Total	1,766	629

*District Registrar, Balashwar.